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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Elder D. Todd Christofferson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father who art in Heaven, we bow before Thee this day, the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and remember with soberness and humility the sacrifice of so many who have offered their lives to preserve our liberty. We pray that Thou wilt bless their descendants and sustain the vital institutions of our government that this precious liberty may be preserved through the generations to come.

We ask Thy blessing upon the U.S. Senate and each of its individual Members this day and in the days and months ahead. Grant them the wisdom and judgment they seek in the disposition of all matters that come before them. Honor their desire to contribute to the well-being of the people of this Nation and indeed those of all nations who may be influenced for good by their decisions.

We thank Thee for Thy abundant mercy and constant blessings upon us. In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

LEGISLATION BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the continuing resolution was filed in the House yesterday. As we wait for the House to take the next step, I encourage all Members to continue reviewing the legislative text, which has been available for some time.

The Water Resources Development Act legislation has been filed in the House as well. This is bipartisan legislation that will strengthen our Nation's infrastructure and commerce while investing in the safety and reliability of our drinking water. As colleagues know, it includes, let me repeat, aid for families in Flint.

As we wait for final passage in the House, I encourage Senators to keep doing our part to ensure that we can bring WRDA and its assistance for Flint over the finish line as soon as possible.

On another matter, I am pleased the 21st Century Cures Act bill will pass this afternoon with significant support from both sides of the aisle. This medical innovation bill will help foster solutions when it comes to heartbreaking illnesses such as Alzheimer's, opioid addiction, mental health disorders, and cancer—heartbreaking illnesses that affect our families, friends, and constituents. This is one of the most meaningful bills we will pass this year, and it would not have been possible without the hard work of colleagues such as Chairman ALEXANDER, Senators CORNYN, HATCH and CASSIDY, and of course along with Ranking Member MURRAY.

Let us also again recognize Vice President BIDEN for his work on the Cancer Moonshot initiatives, which

have fittingly been renamed for Beau Biden in this legislation. I will have more to say about the Vice President when he joins us again this afternoon, but for now I look forward to passing the 21st Century Cures Act today.

On another matter, we will have another important vote this afternoon. It is a vote to move forward on the national defense authorization conference report.

We all know the world the next administration will inherit is a difficult and dangerous one. There are many threats. There are numerous national security challenges, and there is much to be done to better prepare our military and the next administration to deal with them. That is what this bipartisan national defense legislation aims to do. It will help strengthen our military posture. It will send clear messages to both our allies and our adversaries, and it will provide more of the tools our servicemembers need to be successful. It makes clear that we must also pass the continuing resolution that includes funding for the war against ISIL and for our forces in Afghanistan.

We have already seen the consequences of failing to take the necessary steps to confront our national security challenges. It is another reason we need to move forward and pass this defense legislation so we can take forward-looking steps now to help take on these challenges and support our men and women in uniform.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Of course, Mr. President, it is fitting that we are talking about the bravery of our servicemembers on December 7. Today marks the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, a date that FDR rightly predicted "will live in infamy." It is a time when we reflect on the meaning of this day for our country and for our

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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military, a time when we remember all those who sacrificed on our behalf, and a time when we recognize the men and women in uniform currently serving to keep our country safer.

Through the years, one of my greatest experiences has been the opportunity I have had to meet with distinguished Kentucky veterans as they visit Washington through the Honor Flight Program. I know many of our colleagues do the same thing when veterans from their States come to town.

Today I ask our colleagues to join me in remembering all those who served and sacrificed so much and in thanking our men and women in uniform who are stationed around the world this holiday season.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, "God gave us two ears so we would listen more than talk."

It is a simple phrase that many of us have likely heard before, but to Senator KELLY AYOTTE, it is the best piece of advice she says she ever received, and it is a proverb she has lived by during her time in the Senate. In fact, it is how she got her start here in the first place.

As New Hampshire's first female attorney general, KELLY listened to the concerns of those around her. She heard their concerns about the direction our country was going, about the numerous security threats facing our Nation, and about out-of-control spending. She could have just sat on the sidelines as these problems escalated—it certainly would have been the easier choice—but she chose to jump in the game and work to solve them instead. From day one, Senator AYOTTE rolled up her sleeves and got to work. As the most prominent New Hampshire newspaper put it, she has never been a "freshman back-bencher," she has been a dynamo from the start.

I can't say I was surprised. I still remember the first time I heard about KELLY. It was from our former colleague Judd Gregg, who told me about this rising star in New Hampshire. Boy, was he right. It didn't take long for everyone to reach a similar conclusion.

KELLY is tough, she is a problem solver, and she is a fighter. Senator AYOTTE doesn't view the challenges of this job as obstacles either. She prefers to call them opportunities. She says: "It's how you react to those bends in the road that will make the biggest difference in your life." During her 6 years here, she has clearly made a difference in the lives of a lot of others as well.

Senator AYOTTE has helped make a difference as a champion for jobs and as a champion for the economy. As someone who has helped start a small business, she knows firsthand how regulations can stifle growth. She fought to cut through the redtape and the burdensome rules. She cosponsored a law to help small businesses expand and re-

finance, and she worked to strengthen manufacturing and support job training.

Senator AYOTTE has helped make a difference as a leader on combating opioid abuse. As a former prosecutor who has been among the loudest voices drawing attention to this horrible epidemic, she knows how devastating it has been in her State and across the country. She worked with first responders and families to figure out how to address this heartbreaking challenge. She sponsored and helped pass comprehensive legislation that will help us tackle it. Now, in no small part because of her efforts, we will pass critical funding this very week that will help our communities begin to heal.

Like New Hampshire, my home State of Kentucky has been among the hardest hit by this epidemic. It has been a privilege working with my friend to help do something about it.

Senator AYOTTE has helped make a difference as an expert on national security issues too. This military spouse didn't need someone to tell her what it means to serve nor what it means for veterans and their families. She mastered the issue almost overnight. She fought for language in the VA reform legislation to expand choice when it comes to veterans' health care. She helped prevent dangerous Guantanamo terrorists from being moved to U.S. soil, and she has long spoken out about the threat posed by Iran. She just voted to extend some critical sanctions against the regime last week, and Senator AYOTTE has helped lead efforts to counter its ballistic missile program for years.

It is clear she has been a leader on national security issues right from the start. I was proud to have Senator AYOTTE join me and other colleagues on a congressional delegation I led to the Middle East not long after she took office. It was evident then what a difference she would make on these important matters. She has regularly joined in efforts with two other leading voices in our conference on defense, too, Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM. Together, they are the "Three Amigos" or, as our former colleague Joe Lieberman might point out, we should really call them the "Three Amigos 2.0."

Either way, here is what is clear. It is an equal partnership, one of mutual respect and trust, one that has strengthened our conference and defense policy, and one that I am sure Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM would tell you has enriched both their Senate work and their lives. I am sure many other colleagues feel exactly the same way.

Senator AYOTTE set out to make an impact. She clearly made one on her State, her country, for her constituents, and her colleagues, but I know Senator AYOTTE would tell you the most cherished moments of her life aren't those spent in classified briefings or on congressional delegations, they are the ones spent with her fam-

ily—with her husband Joe and their two children, 9-year-old Jake and 12-year-old Kate. They have always been her biggest fans. They are a constant source of comfort and support. Sometimes they like to jump in on the action themselves.

In fact, Kate recently made a cameo—alongside her mother—in an ad featuring the two shooting hoops and practicing layups. From what I hear, Kate may even have her sights on a future in politics. She once advised her mom not to run for President.

Senator AYOTTE was taken aback. She said she wasn't planning on it but wondered why she would ask in the first place. Well, Kate replied: "Because I want to be the first woman President."

I guess it is true what they say, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. It is not surprising when you consider the example KELLY AYOTTE has set, not just for Kate but for so many others as well. If anyone can do it all, it is KELLY AYOTTE. From sports practices and Lego competitions to 5Ks and trips to the largest lake in New Hampshire, the time with her kids is what truly brings KELLY joy.

As all of you know, this job can make you appreciate the little things even more. It is why you will never hear her complain about waiting in the pickup line at school. It is why she enjoys spending her weekend grocery shopping at the Market Basket, probably picking up the ingredients for Grape-Nuts pudding—whatever that is. Apparently, it is one of KELLY's favorites. I will just take her word for that.

I wish to acknowledge what a privilege it has been getting to know Senator AYOTTE and working with her over the past few years. Her impact has been immeasurable, her friendship indisputable. I know she has made her family proud as well.

I want to conclude with a mantra that KELLY and Joe rely upon when facing a challenge: "Brush the dirt off and get back in the game." It is a good reminder for each of us. I feel confident in saying that Senator AYOTTE will be back in the game, looking out for her State and making our country stronger and safer no matter where her next journey leads.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, finally, as each session of Congress comes to a close, both leaders traditionally pay tribute to the retiring Members of their own parties. This year is a bit different, of course, with the retirement of the Democratic leader. So in addition to what I will be saying about him tomorrow, I figured I might shake things up just a bit more, just this one time. I figured I would tell my colleagues about two colleagues from across the aisle who have made their own mark on this Chamber for many years.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

The first colleague I wish to speak about is from Maryland. Some call her Senator MIKULSKI, some call her Senator BARB, but everyone knows this: She is tough. It explains how she got here in the first place.

You see, BARBARA MIKULSKI had a lot of dreams growing up. She wanted to be a scientist. She wanted to be a nun. She even wanted to be an astronaut. And if not for a “C” in chemistry, a vow of obedience, and the thought of wearing a flight suit—or so we have heard—she probably could have done all of those things. But Senator BARB chose a different path—or rather all of them at once. You see, you don’t have to work in a lab to champion science research; you can serve as the lead Democratic appropriator on the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee. You don’t have to put on a habit to look out for others; you can serve as dean of the Senate women and cultivate mentorship among your colleagues. And you certainly don’t have to blast into space to blaze a trail—something this longest serving female Member of Congress knows very well. It wasn’t an easy road getting here. It wasn’t an easy road when she got here. No Democratic woman had ever been elected to the Senate in her own right before BARBARA MIKULSKI. But, as she said on the stump, “I might be short, but I won’t be overlooked.” And, boy, she hasn’t been. I doubt she ever will be. Maybe it has something to do with the mantra she follows: Do or do not—there is no try. No surprise that this “Star Wars” fan is taking advice from Master Yoda.

She has learned a lot from others, too, like her great-grandmother, who emigrated from Poland with hope and little else—hope that her family might one day experience this country’s many freedoms and opportunities. I know she would be proud of her great-granddaughter today, proud of this crime novelist, this crab cake gourmet, this senior Senator from Maryland.

So here is what we have come to know about Senator MIKULSKI: Her word is her bond, she is a passionate advocate for the causes she supports, and good luck stopping her once she puts her mind to something.

BARBARA BOXER

You could say the same thing about another BARBARA I know too. Senator BOXER, like her colleague from Maryland, is hardly the tallest Member around here, but she is not in the habit of getting overlooked either. The Boxer box helps with that, of course. It is what she stands on at press conferences to give her just a little more height. And, yes, if that sounds familiar, that is because it is that box which once served as inspiration for an episode of HBO’s “Veep.”

It is a good thing our colleague has a sense of humor. She understands how far that can go around here. She has often relied on it through her years in the Senate, in fact, including when she

announced her retirement via rhyme: “More than 20 years in a job I love,” she wrote, “thanks to California and the Lord above.” You get the picture. It goes on, but here is the key line: “As long as there are issues and challenges and strife, I will never retire, ‘cause that’s the meaning of my life.” That sure sounds like the Senator BOXER I know.

It is not always easy to find common ground around here. It takes hard work. It takes negotiation. It often takes those intangibles too—like comic relief. So enter Senator INHOFE. I am really going to miss the JIM and BARBARA show when it comes to an end next year, especially after such a storied run over at EPW. One day, she is the boss; the next day, it is he. They are the best of pals; they are the fiercest of rivals. They work together on everything; they agree on almost nothing. It sounds like the premise for some buddy comedy from the 1980s, but here is what it really is: a political masterstroke.

This unlikelyst of partnerships led this year to the first significant environmental reform law in decades. It also led this year to Senate passage of a waterways infrastructure bill that will support important projects across our country. And while some may refer to BOXER and INHOFE as the “oddest of Senate odd couples,” here is what I would call them: pretty smart.

I remember Senator INHOFE always telling me how much he enjoyed working with Senator BOXER and how there were things they could actually agree on, so I made a note of it and kept an eye out for an opportunity of my own. It finally happened in this very Congress. Senator BOXER and Senator INHOFE and I worked together to pass the longest term highway transportation and infrastructure bill in nearly two decades. This isn’t something the critics thought could be done. We each harbored our own doubts. Yet, a bill that repeatedly threatened to come apart actually never did. As Senator BOXER put it, it was “the impossible dream.” It succeeded because we worked in good faith, because we came together, and because we focused on the areas where we did agree and not just the ones where we didn’t.

That is what happens around here when the Senate is working the way it should. We see colleagues from opposite sides working through political differences and coming together on solutions for the American people. Perhaps that is one reason why nearly a quarter of a century later, Senator BOXER says she is leaving the Senate with a full heart. I know she is leaving with the respect of many of her colleagues, too, including some she might not have expected when she first came.

Let me finish with some advice BARBARA MIKULSKI gave to young BARBARA BOXER as she contemplated her first Senate run. “If you run,” Senator MIKULSKI said, “it will be the toughest thing you will ever do,” but, she added,

it will also be “the best thing you will ever do.” I think this is something we can all relate to regardless of which party we belong to and regardless of which State we come from. At the end of the day, we all came here to accomplish things for the people we represent, even if we have different ideas on how to do them.

So, thankfully, there should be no disagreement over this next task. I ask all Senators to join me in recognizing our colleagues for their service and to join me in wishing them good luck as they begin the next chapters of their lives.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

Mr. REID. Madam President, I apologize to Senator BOXER and Senator MIKULSKI. They are going to give their final speeches, but I would like to have this opportunity to speak a few words about President Obama. Of course I will be here for their full speeches.

It is hard to imagine today, but it wasn’t that long ago that Barack Obama was a little-known Illinois legislator with a very unusual name. I still remember the first time I heard that name. I was in the House gym, where Members congregated, and one of the people I shared the room with was Abner Mikva, a longtime Illinois Congressman, an appellate court judge, and President Clinton’s chief legal officer.

I had known that Republican Senator Peter Fitzgerald decided not to run for reelection after one term. Judge Mikva turned to me and said he knew the perfect person to fill that open seat.

I said: Who could that be?

He said: Barack Obama.

I said: What?

He said: Barack Obama.

I said: Who? What kind of a name is that?

He said: He is one of the most talented people I have ever met in all of my years.

That said a lot to me, even though at that time I smiled and left the room.

It didn’t take long, though, before I understood what Abner Mikva said to me. Barack Obama won that election in the Senate. He came from nowhere, a man with an unusual name, but once he was here, it was obvious he was the real deal. His ability to communicate was, and is, stunning. I can remember one of the first floor speeches he gave here in the Senate on George Bush’s policy regarding the Middle East war. It was eloquent, thoughtful, powerful. I was so impressed that following his speech—there had been a quorum call—his seat was way back there, and I

walked up to him and I said—he was sitting, I was standing looking over him, and I said: Senator, that was really terrific. That was really good.

I will never forget his response. Without hesitation, without any braggadocio, no conceit, but with humility, he looked up to me and said: I have a gift.

It wasn't a boast; it was a fact. I have never met anyone with the ability to communicate as well as Barack Obama. Whether it is in his writing, speaking to huge crowds of tens of thousands of people or small crowds, or someone on a one-on-one basis, he is without equal when it comes to communicating.

His reputation was well known even before he came to the Senate. He had written a book—a bestseller called “Dreams from My Father”—a decade before arriving here in the Senate. Like his 2006 book—also a bestseller—called “The Audacity of Hope,” this book was full of lyrical and insightful writing.

In “Dreams from My Father,” he outlined the remarkable story of his life we have all come to know. Born in Kenya in faraway Africa was his father. His mother was from Kansas. He was raised by his grandparents in Hawaii. His mother and grandparents set positive examples for him. They pushed him to always do better, to be the man he was born to be. That upbringing would serve him well.

Barack Obama went to some of the most elite schools in the world. He was an undergraduate at Columbia, where, of course, he was an honor student, then Harvard Law School. He graduated with distinction. He made history as the first African American to be elected president of the Harvard Law Review. Just to be a member of the Harvard Law Review—having gone to law school myself—is significant, but he was the No. 1 guy in that very prestigious law school. Even then, his reputation for bringing people together and his gift of communication were renowned.

He continued to excel after law school. He became a professor of constitutional law at one of America's great law schools. He became a community organizer, as he has spoken about a lot. He became an Illinois State senator before giving one of the most dramatic convention speeches in American history at the 2004 Democratic Convention in Boston.

Throughout it all, his ability to communicate and connect with people fueled his ascendancy. Those skills made Barack Obama a terrific Senator, and they have greatly benefited our country over the past 8 years.

In just a few weeks, Barack Obama will finish his term as the 44th President of our great country. He will be leaving office. I don't know if I am leaving with him or if he is leaving with me. I guess I leave a few days before he does, but we are leaving together. I cannot think of a better per-

son with whom to leave public service than Barack Obama. For 8 years I was his point man, and it has been an honor and an effort of pleasure.

What this man accomplished, despite unprecedented obstruction from the Republicans, is remarkable. History will remember President Barack Obama's many accomplishments. I don't want to get the Presiding Officer in trouble, but it was because of her and two other Republican Senators that his first congressional session was remarkably historic. We wanted to do more, but this good woman presiding over the Senate today said: Enough is enough. We had to retract some of the things we wanted to do. It was hard, but I do say this: It would not have happened but for the Presiding Officer.

President Obama saved the country from economic collapse, ushering in a new era of growth. Since 2010, the economic recovery has added more than 16 million private sector jobs. Median household incomes have risen significantly. The unemployment rate is now 4.6 percent. In some States, like the State of Nevada, it is more than 14 percent. President Obama brought the American auto and manufacturing industries back from the brink of collapse with unique programs—Cash for Clunkers—and more than 800,000 new manufacturing jobs since 2010. The auto industry has added almost 700,000 jobs since 2009. Domestic production of automobiles doubled from below 6 million units per year to 12 million per year in 2015.

President Obama brought health care to tens of millions of Americans through the Affordable Care Act. Every day, we learn how important this bill has been. We heard from the very conservative American Hospital Association today that doing away with ObamaCare would bankrupt the hospital industry. We would lose over the next few years almost \$200 billion. Through the Affordable Care Act, 21 million more Americans now have affordable health care. The uninsured rate is at an all-time low, and 92 percent of Americans now have coverage. Insurance companies cannot deny coverage and charge more to cover people with preexisting conditions.

How many of us have gone out to our home States and had people with tears in their eyes say: You know, Debbie has been sick since she was a little girl with diabetes, and now, for the first time in her life, she can have health insurance.

Insurance companies can't discriminate anymore against anyone because of their gender. All women were discriminated against before. Every American with insurance has access to preventive care without cost sharing. That means no copays for immunizations, cancer screenings, contraceptive coverage for women, diabetes screenings, or blood pressure and cholesterol tests.

President Obama held Wall Street accountable. He signed into law the most

comprehensive Wall Street and financial reform legislation since the Great Depression. His administration established a new watchdog to help protect consumers from unfair financial practices. He signed legislation into law that protects homeowners from mortgage fraud.

President Obama took more action to protect our planet from a changing climate, including the historic Paris Agreement.

I met yesterday with Native Alaskans. It was scary to talk to a Native Alaskan woman. In her town of 800, people are having trouble getting in and out of the town. She told me the animals are confused because the seasons are changing.

The caribou have traveled for 20,000 years, we believe, 3,000 miles to migrate every year. They walk in single file, not in large herds jammed together. She said they are having such difficulty. They used to be able to walk over the ice. They can't. There is no ice. They have to swim.

President Obama made the largest investment ever in renewable energy. He tripled wind power and increased solar power by 30 times, creating more than 200,000 jobs in solar alone, with hundreds of thousands more jobs in the next few years.

President Obama protected more than 260 million acres of public lands and waters. That includes more than 700,000 acres in Nevada with one order that he signed called the Basin and Range National Monument, a place where John Muir came looking around for special places in America. He camped in hills in the Basin and Range. Hopefully, some day every Senator can go to this magnificent place in the desert. It has taken 40 years to build. One man has done it, a famous artist by the name of Michael Heizer. It is called the City. It is stunning. When I talk about 40 years, it wasn't work done on weekends. It was days, weekends, overtime, and large contingencies of people he directed. This magnificent thing in the middle of the desert is now protected forever.

President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama have made our Nation's children a top priority. In 2010, President Obama signed a bill into law to fight child hunger and improve school meals to ensure children receive the nutrition they need to have healthy, successful futures.

President Obama made strides on education. Our Nation's high school graduation rate is the highest in the history of our country. He reformed student loan programs, increased Pell grants, made student loan repayment more affordable, and expanded loan forgiveness for graduates who enter public service professions.

President Obama granted deferred action to immigrant youth who would have qualified under the DREAM Act, bringing nearly 800,000 young people out of the shadows.

President Obama made our country more inclusive. He signed the repeal of

don't ask, don't tell. He signed Executive orders protecting LGBT workers. Americans are now free to marry the person they love, regardless of their gender.

As Commander in Chief, President Obama brought bin Laden to justice.

These are just a few aspects of President Obama's storied legacy, and it is still growing—what a record. It is a legacy of which he should be satisfied. America is better because of this good man being 8 years in the White House.

I am even more impressed by who he is as a person than who he is as President. He is a man of integrity and honesty. I have learned so much from him. I have never heard Barack Obama denigrate anyone, ever. There have been times he could have. Perhaps, I thought a negative word should have been said and I suggested that to him, but he would never take it. No, he wouldn't do that. That is Barack Obama.

Above all, I admire the attention he has given his family. He may be President of the United States, but nothing gets in the way of his family. He is a terrific husband to Michelle and an outstanding father to Sasha and Malia. He arrives home for dinner with his family virtually every night he is in Washington. He goes to their plays and games. President or not, he is a husband and a father.

His devotion extends to his staff as well, and he has had a terrific staff working for him. I can't mention all of them, but I will mention his present Chief of Staff, Denis McDonough. He and I have a very close relationship. Close relationships come with a lot of difficulty sometimes. It has been tough, but we tried to work through it together.

Pete Rouse is one of the nicest people I have ever known. He also worked with the President very closely. He was his chief of staff as Senator, and, of course, a chief adviser when he was in the White House.

Rahm Emanuel, now the leader of Chicago, IL, was former Chief of Staff, and is currently mayor of Chicago. He is a man known for his bluntness and his productivity as a Member of Congress and as Chief of Staff.

Alyssa Mastromonaco was former Deputy Chief of Staff and I hope that I had something to do with the romance that wound up with her marrying my chief of staff, David Krone.

These are just a few of the incredible people I have had the pleasure of working with. They are all wonderful.

Then there is President Obama's Cabinet—a Cabinet of quality. That includes my friend, Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, a wonderful man and a terrific public servant, a man of substance like no other ever known.

After 8 years leading the country, President Obama is leaving office on a high point. When he first took office, our country was in an economic free fall and hemorrhaging jobs. Now the country is experiencing the longest

streak of private sector job growth ever. We have the lowest unemployment rate in nearly a decade.

After 8 years of President Obama, we are now as a country on a sustainable path to fight climate change and grow renewable energy sources. We are more respected around the world. We reached international agreements to curb climate change, stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and we are on the path to normalizing relations with our neighbor Cuba.

Our country has made significant strides in nearly every way. There is no doubt that the United States is better now than we were 8 years ago, and we have Barack Obama to thank for that.

Thank you, President Obama, for being the person you are.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

TSUNAMI WARNING, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 34, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 34, an act to authorize and strengthen the tsunami detection, forecast, warning, research, and mitigation program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with McConnell amendment No. 5117, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 5118 (to amendment No. 5117), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, this is a moment for me that, I think it is fair to say, I will never ever forget.

I am so honored. I am so honored to have members of my family here, staff from past and present from both my personal office and committee, extraordinary colleagues whom I adore and love, whom I worked with, fought with and debated. I am so honored that Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID have said really nice things about me.

I think, in Senator REID's case, we go back so long, and I will talk a little bit more about that. In Senator MCCONNELL's case, we didn't talk for a long time, and then we did get together and we did some great work together. But I think he was here just to make sure I am leaving. My leader over in the House is here—NANCY PELOSI. I will talk about her more. My colleagues

from the House came over in the midst of all their work. I love them. I have enjoyed working with them.

I look around this Chamber, and I realize the reason I am able to actually leave is because I know each of you and your passion to make life better for people, and that is what it is all about.

When I decided not to run for reelection, you know how the press always follows you around. They said: "Is this bittersweet for you?"

My answer was forthcoming: "No way is it bitter. In every way it is sweet."

Why do I feel that way? It is because this has been a dream, to be in a profession that I think is noble, no matter how beaten up it gets, for 40 years—for more than half my life—and I was able to do every day what I always wanted to do, which is simply to make life better for people. I didn't always succeed. Were there frustrations? Yes. Were there disappointments? Yes. Were there defeats? Yes, many, but every morning when I woke up, I knew I had a chance to do something good.

As a first generation American on my mother's side, and, most particularly, as a woman, I never in my wildest dreams imagined that I could be in the U.S. Senate. It was an uphill battle, and I know I speak for a lot of people sitting right here who know what I am talking about.

When I first ran for the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 1972, it was a Republican landslide year. It was more than tough. I will never forget one woman I spoke with after knocking on her door. I introduced myself and said, "Hi, I am Barbara Boxer. I am running for county supervisor."

She greeted me by saying, "I never thought you would be so short." Then, she said she wasn't supporting me because, quote, "You have four kids, and you are going to neglect them if you are elected."

Well, never mind that this was a part-time job just a few minutes from the house. Never mind that the man I was running against had a family and a full-time job. Never mind that I actually had two kids, but she insisted. She said, "I know you have four kids because I read it in the newspaper."

I said, "Lady, when you give birth, you never forget it, and I did it twice."

Well, I lost that seat, but two things helped get me through it. The first was an article by Gloria Steinem, who essentially said women tend to take losses too personally. We have to understand that we could be just a little bit ahead of our time, and we can't give up.

Second, my son Doug, only seven at the time, ignored any attempts to cheer him up by saying, "Mom, can you make me a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch?"

The point is that life goes on no matter how deep the disappointments. You pick yourself up, and you keep fighting because this is your country. It is our country, and it is worth fighting for. I

ran again four years later and won. I was eager to get to work on issues such as:

Afterschool for kids.

Protecting the natural beauty of my county.

Ensuring that a child walking to school would be safe. I put up so many stop signs to protect kids that I soon became known as the "Stop Sign Queen."

It was local government, and the world was changing. The Vietnam War was raging. The women's movement was ramping up. The oil companies wanted to drill off the pristine coast of California. Even from my position as a local county supervisor representing only 40,000 people, I was exposed to these national issues that would soon require all of my attention.

Tip O'Neill, one of NANCY PELOSI's great predecessors, was known for his saying that "All politics is local," but the global became local when Marin County got a Federal grant saying the threat of nuclear attack is real, and you have to have a plan to evacuate the county in case there is a bomb dropped in San Francisco. This was in the 1980's.

The Reagan administration, I think, missed the obvious. Getting in a car on a narrow road to evacuate to Napa or going under your desk was not going to protect you, so all five supervisors—three Republicans and two Democrats—rejected the grant. Instead, we mailed an informational booklet to every household, telling them there was no way to evacuate from a nuclear bomb; you have to prevent it in the first place.

During that same period, James Watt wanted to drill off the coast of California. We put together business people, environmentalists, farmers, and we said no. The tourist industry joined us, and we stopped it.

That was my first attempt at very broad coalition building. As national issues unfolded before my eyes, I had to do more if I really wanted to stay true to making life better for people.

When John Burton's seat for Congress opened up in 1982, I jumped in. It was a long shot. And I will always be grateful to the people who brought me to that dance: working people, environmentalists, children's advocates. They put me over the top.

After I won this election, I began hearing about the mysterious disease that was stealing the lives of so many in my congressional district. I remember feeling so helpless because we didn't know what it was and what caused it. One thing was clear: AIDS was devastating, and too many in Washington were not taking action.

When we found out it could be transmitted sexually, I had to go up against the far rightwing who didn't want to provide any information about the disease. Yet here I was, a middle-aged mother of two from the suburbs, talking about condoms. It was uncomfortable, but this would become my way. In

the face of a crisis, never look away, never back down, and never be afraid.

In the case of AIDS, I got to work with the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, a southern gentleman. He had never heard of AIDS. He said to me: "If people are sick, then we must help." We got the first double-digit Federal AIDS funding, and we established an AIDS Task Force and brought in people such as Elizabeth Taylor and Elizabeth Glaser, and we fought back. We took it under our wing to solve this crisis—both adult AIDS and pediatric AIDS.

By that time, I had an extraordinary new partner in the House, NANCY PELOSI. We immediately bonded. I was so impressed with her passion and her energy. We remain the dearest of friends to this day. I am so proud of her. NANCY has changed the face of politics in America, and she will go down in history as one of the most influential leaders of our time.

Recently—on a recent issue—I was expressing deep disappointment, and NANCY told me: "Don't agonize. Organize!" This was two nights ago. She is right. When things get tough, that is what you do.

Over the years, the issues kept coming my way and came the way of a lot of people in this room: the Violence Against Women Act, LGBT equality, protecting a woman's right to choose, workers' rights, protecting the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. Those are all examples. These fights continue, and they keep coming whether you are in elected office or not. They come to you if you are a single parent trying to raise a child and struggling to make ends meet on a minimum wage that is not fair. They come to you if your kid gets asthma. They come to you if your job has been outsourced and you have nowhere to turn. They come to you when college tuition gets out of reach.

Whether it is happening to you or someone else, the great thing about our participatory democracy is each of us has a chance to make a difference. You can make a difference by holding an elected office or working for someone who does. You can make a difference by working for a campaign. You can make a difference by starting a business and employing good people to help you build it. You can make a difference by becoming a teacher, a nurse, a firefighter or a police officer.

There are so many noble ways to make a difference in America. The one thing you cannot do, even when it is tempting: You cannot turn away—never. The forces and the people who shape you cannot be ignored. I say to everybody within the sound of my voice that you have it within you to step out and make your mark.

A lot of young people come up to me and say, "I would love to do what you do. How do I become a U.S. Senator?"

I am sure a lot of us get that question.

I always say, "It is not important to be something; it is important to do something."

If you choose my path and the path of many in this room, I want to be clear: You will need mentors and you will need friends like two of mine—John Burton and BARBARA MIKULSKI. John encouraged me to run for the House, where he had always been a fighter for those without a voice.

BARBARA had been my friend in the House and encouraged me to run for the Senate. When I went to see her, she said, very simply: "Go for it." That and \$40 million—that was good advice. And I did. Senator MIKULSKI is everything a Senator should be. She is intelligent, caring, always focused, and as an added bonus, she can have you in stitches. I am so grateful for her guidance and, most important, her friendship.

I launched my campaign for the Senate. It was very difficult. No one predicted I would win. I was less than an asterisk in the polls. I was filled with doubt. Coming to my aid was my senior Senator, DIANNE FEINSTEIN. She stood by my side, even though it could have cost her votes. I will never, ever forget that. Thank you, DIANNE.

I also need to pay tribute to Anita Hill because without her, I never would have been elected to the Senate. Anita Hill courageously told her story to the all-male U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, breaking the silence on this painful issue. In addition, people saw there were only two women in the Senate.

Anita Hill, you showed us all that we must never be afraid to take on the powerful. It certainly isn't easy, but if you learn to be tough in the right way, you can find the sweet spot, even in this atmosphere where the parties have grown so far apart. This is one of my biggest regrets—how far the parties have grown apart, especially when it comes to the environment.

Remember, Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency. He signed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. George H.W. Bush signed the extension of the Clean Air Act. Many Republicans led the charge for environmental protection. Now, unfortunately, protecting the environment has become a divide where we truly duke it out.

As I leave here, I intend to do everything in my power to work to bridge that divide because we all live on one planet. It doesn't matter what party we are. We all breathe the same air. We all want our families to be healthy and live on a planet that can sustain us and all of God's creations. In this time of deep division, we have to find areas to work together.

I think I found a proven formula in my relationship with my friend and chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator JIM INHOFE. We never surprise each other, even where we disagree—ever. Our

word is our bond to each other. We found that we could work as a winning team to build and strengthen our Nation's infrastructure, and we have made incredible progress for the American people on those issues—long-term highway bills, long-term water bills and the first update on the Toxic Control Act. That was a doozy for us. I will never forget that battle.

Transportation turned out to be a sweet spot between Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL and me. We hadn't talked seriously for 20 years because of the Packwood case. It was: Hello, hello. That was it. But we did come together to save the Highway Trust Fund at an urgent time.

Our work together surprised so many of our colleagues, but I think it surprised the two of us more than anything else. But it worked because we set aside all of our past legitimate divisions in order to rescue America's transportation system. We took a risk, and the risk paid off. And, of course, all of my colleagues helped make that possible.

Also, I want to mention my Republican counterpart on the Ethics Committee, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON, because when it comes to ethics, we have proven there is no room for partisanship. All we want to do is make sure the Senate is a respected institution. Friendship and trust with Members on both sides and in the House of Representatives—I am so proud so many of you are here—that is the only way to get things done.

Having a leader who has your back is essential. A good leader knows and understands each member of his caucus and where they draw the line. HARRY is so humble. Whenever you talk about him, he puts his head down.

HARRY, could you just look at me for a second?

A good leader knows when to speak up and when to listen. A good leader knows when to pick up the gloves and fight like hell. That is what HARRY REID has done. He is not a show horse; he is a workhorse.

He is a soft-spoken man. How many of us have to say: HARRY, could you speak up? He is a soft-spoken man of a few words, but he chooses his words wisely, and he chooses his fights wisely. He doesn't seek the spotlight. When it comes to standing up for what is right, he is right there when others try to slip out of the room.

HARRY has not only been an extraordinary leader and colleague, he and his wife, Landra, have been close and treasured friends of me and my husband, Stewart. I call him the brother I never had, and he calls me the sister he never had. He treats me like a sister; he always hangs up on me when I call him. And he never calls on me when I madly wave my hand at caucus. You know, I am like a sister. You don't have to worry, the love will be there. I am forever grateful for his leadership and his friendship.

Another quality of HARRY REID is that he encouraged women to run for

the Senate. Once we got here, he made sure we had major responsibilities. HARRY, you will go down in history for that.

I am, of course, ecstatic that my successor is Kamala Harris, who served as attorney general for my State with great distinction and who will continue the tradition of having a strong, progressive woman in this seat.

Kamala, you heard it here—a strong, progressive woman in this seat is what we need.

As I wind down my remarks, I must be completely honest about my broken heart. I worked hard, along with so many millions of Americans, so that we would have our first female President. It was not to be this time, but we made history with Hillary Clinton, the first female nominee of a major party, who, I might add, won the popular vote by millions and still counting. She truly shattered the glass ceiling and showed that women had the ability to take it on the chin again and again.

My message to everyone who supported Hillary is, the work goes on. Yes, you build on success and you learn from failure, but you never stop working for human rights, civil rights, women's rights, voting rights, children's rights and the environment. I certainly don't plan to stop.

I am not only fortunate to have had this extraordinary career, but I am also so fortunate to be going home to a State that stands for everything I believe in.

I wish to thank every one of my staffers—those who worked for me in Washington, either on my personal staff, committee staff, those who worked for me in the State, and those who helped me get elected. A lot of them are here today. Without them, I never ever could have done my job, and I never could have accomplished the things I have accomplished that I am proud of.

I also wish to thank the floor staff. The floor staff never gets thanked enough because they deal with us when we are very nervous. They have to deal with us when we are about to have an amendment come up or about to vote on something and need to understand the rules and our rights.

To Gary and his team, Trish, Tim, and all of you—thank you.

When I look back on everything I fought for, there are more than a thousand accomplishments, and I am certainly not going to talk about all of those, but I am going to, briefly, very fast, go through 10 of my favorites. The first afterschool programs that were funded by the Federal Government, covering more than 1.6 million kids every day; 1 million acres of California wilderness preserved; the first-ever comprehensive combat casualty care center in California for our most wounded warriors; ensuring that our transportation programs remain in place for years to come with millions of jobs protected; upholding our landmark environmental laws, and I hope

that continues, but I will not go off on that; setting clean drinking water standards to protect pregnant women, children, and other vulnerable people; the dolphin-safe tuna label; protecting victims of rape in the military from irrelevant, harassing questions that have already been barred in civilian courts; establishing the first-ever subcommittee to oversee global women's issues, which JEANNE is going to carry on; recommending a diverse group of supremely qualified judicial nominees who are carrying out our laws in California's Federal courts. There are many more I could talk about, and we all know this because each one of them is like a child to us and we remember how hard it was to get it done, but let me be clear, you don't get anything done here unless your colleagues help you from both sides of the aisle.

My biggest regret is that I couldn't end the war in Iraq. It hurt my soul. I came down to the floor every day and read the names of fallen soldiers. I was accused of being too emotional. I asked probing questions in committee to expose the fact that we were in the middle of a civil war. Day after day I made my case, but the war went on and on. It took President Obama to finally end that war, and I will always be grateful to him.

Of course, there is unfinished business, and I know my colleagues are going to carry on. We must restore the Voting Rights Act. We need to restore trust between our communities and law enforcement. We have to continue to protect and provide affordable health care. We must take action on climate change or we are in deep trouble as humankind. We must protect the DREAMers and immigrants who contribute to our communities every day. We must raise the minimum wage and ensure equal pay for equal work. We must protect reproductive freedom and work across party lines for a safe world.

I have often joked about some of the things that have been said to me over the years that are too colorful, in a negative way, to repeat here, but I want everyone to know, whether friend or foe, whether critic or admirer, I do appreciate the fact that you let me know how you felt about my work one way or the other.

To close, I will read a handwritten letter I received in October from one of the greatest jazz musicians in our country, Sonny Rollins, into the RECORD. He was recently honored at the Kennedy Center. He wrote in longhand the following:

Greetings—so sorry that we are not going to have you for us anymore. I've always been interested in politics, marching as a 6 year old with my activist grandmother for civil rights. It has been such a joy and inspiration knowing that Barbara Boxer was there for us.

God bless you, your family, and loved ones—And thank you.

You will be missed and we all love you.

Have a beautiful life, just like you have made life beautiful for so many citizens.

I wish to thank Sonny Rollins. I don't know him personally. I met him once, but what he said is all I wanted to do—make life beautiful for people. I didn't always succeed. I didn't always prevail. I felt the pain of losing many times, but I can honestly say I never stopped trying. I was able to do it because of the love, understanding and support of my husband of 55 years, Stewart, who is here today. He gave me so much, including the best political name ever. I did it because of my son Doug, my daughter Nicole, my daughter-in-law Amy, my son-in-law Kevin, and four incredible grandchildren, Zach, Zain, Sawyer, and Reyna, and because of the people of California who sent me here time and time again—10 years in the House and 24 years in the Senate. I had the opportunity to never stop trying. I had the opportunity to speak out, and no matter how many times I had to try, I did. Here is the thing. I have this platform, which is an extraordinary honor. This is a sacred position, and I say to my colleagues that no matter who says what about it, it is a sacred position. Hold your head high.

So many here have fought the good fight and will continue to fight the good fight, and I will always treasure my time serving the people. They gave me a purpose in my life that I will always cherish. They made me a better person. They made my life more beautiful than I ever could have imagined, and for that I am forever grateful.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). The Senator from Oklahoma.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, that was a very emotional and heartfelt speech. As I look around, I know there are a lot of people who want to respond and be heard, but I grabbed it first. This will be real short.

I believe it was the majority leader who gave me a quote this morning. He made the comment that the two of you agree on nothing, but you get everything done.

Mrs. BOXER. That is right.

Mr. INHOFE. There is a reason for that. If you stop and think about it, we came to the House and Senate at about the same time. There are no two people in this body who are further apart from each other than BARBARA BOXER and JIM INHOFE. Yet we have something beautiful. I hesitate to show this AP picture of our embrace, but it has to be in the record here somewhere.

For 12 years, we swapped—back and forth—being chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. I always remember when the Republicans were in the majority back in—let's see. We lost it in 2006. I remember seeing BARBARA, Al Gore, and all these other people danced in and out the door saying the world is going to come to an end unless we do all of these things.

At that time, she said something very profound that I never forgot, and

I thought about it for the next 8 years. She said that we look at things differently. We had an election and elections have consequences. Remember that elections have consequences. Well, 2 years ago, the Republicans took over, and I gave her a T-shirt that said: "Elections have consequences." During all that time, we didn't really change in terms of what we were doing together. I have a list of the things we have done that I left someplace, but, nevertheless, we did the highway bill in 1998 and 2005. All of the things we did actually worked. I remember when we had a news conference on TSCA. When I looked around, I saw all of my very liberal Democratic friends and me, and I thought: Wait a minute. How did this happen?

We have been able to work together and get things done, and I have been very proud of that. In fact, I shouldn't say this because I am going to divulge our confidence, but we have meetings just as Democrats have their meetings. All the chairmen get together, and when it was my turn to make a statement, I said: Now, from the committee that gets things done. Anyway, that is the way it has been.

I disagreed with Senator BOXER on a lot of the regulations, and I have told her many times she has every right to be wrong.

Mrs. BOXER. You do.

Mr. INHOFE. But on the things that were really important, we did manage to get things accomplished. There is an awful lot of hate around here, and it is so unnecessary. You can disagree with someone and love them anyway. I have to say that confession is good for the soul, but I want my good friend to know I am truly going to miss her around here.

Mrs. BOXER. I thank the Senator from Oklahoma so much.

Mr. INHOFE. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the relationship we felt was based on trust and honesty. We never ever misled each other. I just love the Senator's staff. I really do. Our staff developed the same type of relationship that we developed—disagreeing on many things but understanding that we can work together and find common ground. I just hope, as I step out the door—Lord knows when that will be, given this place—that others will form this type of bond across party lines because without it, things just don't work right.

I want my friend to know it has been a great pleasure to work with him in every way, shape, and form. One of us is from Venus and one of us is from Mars, and that is just the way it is. We just see the world differently, but it hasn't stopped us from putting aside those disagreements. We were never bitter with each other.

We had a pretty big divide. One person said climate change is a hoax and the other said it is the biggest threat

we have to deal with, but we knew there was no way we could come together so we kind of put it aside and didn't let it spoil our friendship or our ability to work together in any way.

So I think it is a very important message to many chairmen and ranking members that if there is honesty—set it aside if you can't work together, but where you can find those sweet spots, do it because everyone wants—they are cheering us on from the outside. I can't tell you how many people at home tell me: We don't know how you do it, but it is great what you and INHOFE get done.

Fortunately, we never lost an election over our friendship, which could have happened, you know. They could have said: I am not going to vote for him; he talks to her. But we were able to prove that we can do it.

So, JIM, I am honored that you came down to the floor. I am honored that Senator MCCONNELL said such nice things. I am so honored that so many came to the floor to hear my farewell remarks.

Again, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, it is with deep gratitude that I rise today to address my Senate colleagues and members of my staff with whom I have had the privilege of serving over the last 6 years.

First and foremost, I want to thank the people of New Hampshire for giving me the extraordinary opportunity to serve them. From Nashua to Newport, to the North Country, they have inspired me. The people of our State are hard-working, caring, compassionate people with grit. They have a fierce sense of independence that I respect and admire. That spirit has guided me during my time here, and it has been the privilege of a lifetime to serve them.

I want to thank my family—my husband Joe, my wingman. Joe is a patriot with a heart of service. That is why he served our country as a fighter pilot in the Air Force and why he has been my biggest supporter during my service not only as New Hampshire's attorney general but as a Senator. We are so proud of our children, Kate and Jake, who are now 12 and 9. My family has sacrificed so that I could serve the people of New Hampshire, and I am grateful for their patience and love. I also thank my mother Kathy, who is and always has been my mentor and No. 1 cheerleader. I could not have done it without her help and that of my stepfather Jim, my uncle Jack, my aunt Jane, and all of our extended family who have done so much for us. They made it possible for me to serve, and there are not adequate words to express how much their love and support means to me.

I also thank my wonderful and hard-working staff in New Hampshire and Washington, whose dedication, work

ethic, and talent are unparalleled in the Senate. I am especially fortunate that some of the members of my staff have served by my side since I was first sworn in 6 years ago. My staff is dedicated, creative, tireless, and compassionate. I am so proud of our team and all we have accomplished together. I am confident that they will continue to work to create a brighter future for New Hampshire and for our country.

I ask unanimous consent to have a list of their names printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CURRENT STAFF

Kristine Adams, Erica Andeweg, Daniel Auger, Camden Bisson, Bradley Bowman, John Chambers III, Ryan Clark, Frederick Dressler, Adam Hechavarria, Kelsey Keegan, Shaylyn Kelly, Marne Marotta, Myles Matteson, Richard Murphy III, Kayla Nations, Gabriel Noronha, Taylor Reidy, Samantha Roberts, Chloe Rockow, Bethany Scully, DeWayne Thomas, Elizabeth Johnson, Gene Chandler, Jerome Maslan, Cynthia Woodward, Jane Bosse, Christopher Connelly, Joseph Doiron, Orville Fitch, Michael Garcia, Eric Hensel, Stephen Monier, John Pearson, Neva Varsalona, Gretchen Wade, Lauren Zelt, Matthew Bartlett, Brenda Kittle, Anne Warburton, Kathryn Sullivan.

FORMER STAFF

Kelcey Raymond, Nathanael Anderson, Robin Anderson, William Ardinger, Christin Ballou, Benjamin Bradley, Gwendolyn Cassidy, Thomas DeRosa, Virginia Demers, Dennis Deziel, Elizabeth Drumm, Danielle Duchesne, John Easton, Robert Fraser, Robert Ganim, Elliot Gault, Claire Gimbastiani, Jeffrey Grappone, Elizabeth Guyton, Timothy Hefferan, Brian Hodges, Kathryn Horgan, Debra Jarrett, Alison Kamataris, Sean Knox, John Lawrence, Andrew Leach, Emily Lynch, Cathy Myers, Franci Nichols, Margaret Ouellette, Irina Owens, Kelsey Patten, Brianna Puccini, Matt Reeder, Wade Sarraf, Michael Scala, Robert Seidman, Lauren Spivey, Alexander Stanford, Susan-Anne Terzakis, Simon Thomson, Linda Tomlinson.

Ms. AYOTTE. I want to take a moment to thank the Capitol Police, who devote themselves to keeping us safe each and every day and who have become friends to my staff and me over the years. I am so grateful for all of our first responders who put their lives on the line each and every day to keep us safe. I also thank the Senate floor staff, the pages, and everyone who works so hard behind the scenes to make our work possible here.

During the past 6 years, I have traveled throughout New Hampshire talking to people from all walks of life, listening to their ideas and learning from their experiences. I have met so many hard-working people in our State who have, in turn, inspired me to work hard on their behalf. True to the nature of our great State, they have never been shy about letting me know what is on their minds, whether it was at one of the 50 townhall meetings we held or in the grocery aisle at the Market Basket. They sent me to the Senate with a sense of purpose. It has been an honor

to fight for them and their families every single day.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my time in the Senate has been standing up for those who put their lives on the line for our country—our veterans and our men and women in uniform and their families. Today, we mark the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. We are reminded once again of their selfless service and sacrifice on behalf of our great Nation.

I was honored during my time here to lead the charge to repeal unfair cuts for our military retirees and to help make progress toward improving access to local health care for veterans in New Hampshire, who for far too long have been forced to travel long distances to receive care from a VA facility because we don't have a full-service hospital, unfortunately, in the State of New Hampshire. Too often, our veterans are not treated as they should be, and this has to change. They have sacrificed so much for our freedom and deserve only the best from us.

As the wife of a combat veteran who served in Iraq, nothing has been more important to me than keeping our country safe. That commitment is deeply personal to me. One of the greatest privileges I have had as a Senator is to visit with members of our New Hampshire National Guard and our men and women in uniform who serve overseas and are there now as we are here today. We pray for their safe return. They make us so proud. They represent the very best of our State and our country.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I have been proud to advocate for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the skilled workers there who make vital contributions to our national security. This has been a team effort between New Hampshire and Maine. I thank my colleagues—Senator SHAHEEN; Senator COLLINS, whom I see here today; and Senator ANGUS KING—for their incredible work in supporting the shipyard.

I especially want to thank Senator SHAHEEN for all the work we did together on important issues for our State. Whether it was advocating for the shipyard, for Pease and the 157th Air Refueling Wing to receive the new tanker, for our National Guard, or for our veterans, we always looked for ways to come together for the people of New Hampshire, and I appreciate her dedication and service.

Since I first came to the Senate, one of my top priorities has been reversing the Obama administration's misguided policy to empty and close the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. Each year I have led efforts to prevent the transfer of terrorist to the United States, to our soil here, and to urge the administration to be transparent with the American people about these dangerous detainees.

As I have called for previously, I hope the new administration will immediately halt the dangerous policy of re-

leasing Guantanamo terrorists to other countries where they even rejoin terrorist activities, and finally establish a commonsense detention policy that keeps terrorists off the battlefield and protects American lives and our national security.

We made progress in saving taxpayer dollars at the Pentagon—and I know there is more work that needs to be done—by ending wasteful programs, such as the missile to nowhere, and passing the Never Contract With the Enemy legislation that cut through redtape and helped prevent tens of millions of dollars from ending up in the hands of our enemies.

Working with Chairman MCCAIN, I was proud to help lead the successful effort to help prevent the premature retirement of the A-10 aircraft, ensuring that our ground troops continue to have the best close air support possible to keep them safe.

During my time on the committee, I have had the privilege of working closely with Chairman JOHN MCCAIN and Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM to ensure that America maintains the strongest and best military in the world and to ensure that our country continues to be the greatest force for good in the world. There are no stronger voices in this body for America's leadership in the world, nor fiercer advocates for our men and women in uniform than Chairman JOHN MCCAIN and Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM. Now more than ever, we need their leadership, expertise, and passion for keeping this country safe with the challenges we face around the world. I am honored to have worked with them and, most of all, to call them my friends.

Serving on the Armed Services Committee has been one of the best experiences I have had in the Senate. I want to express my gratitude to all of my fellow committee members because it has truly been a bipartisan effort each year to ensure our troops have the resources they need to do their jobs.

I see Senator MCCASKILL, the Senator from Missouri, here. I have deeply appreciated the work we have done together on behalf of our men and women in uniform. Thank you.

Going forward, it is critical that Congress and the next administration work together to reverse the harmful cuts to our military and to ensure that we have a defense budget based on the threats we face around the world right now, which are unprecedented.

Another issue that has been near and dear to my heart is addressing a devastating epidemic that is facing the State of New Hampshire; that is, the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic that is taking a devastating toll on our State. I have met so many people in New Hampshire who are hurting because of this epidemic—mothers and fathers who have lost children, brothers and sisters who have lost siblings. Many of the families who have been affected have become my dear friends, like Doug and Pam Griffin of Newton,

NH, who lost their beautiful daughter Courtney, who had so much potential. They lost her to an overdose.

The Griffins, like so many other families in New Hampshire I have met, have turned their pain into passion to save our families. I have learned so much from their experiences. They inspired me to work with a group of great Senators and my colleagues: Senator ROB PORTMAN, who I know is here today; Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island; and Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR from Minnesota. The four of us came together and worked on what is called the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This bill will provide a much needed framework for addressing this epidemic through prevention, treatment, recovery, and support for our first responders, who are doing so much for this epidemic. As a bipartisan team, we worked on this legislation for more than 2 years. Our bill passed the Senate overwhelmingly and was signed into law earlier this year.

CARA will focus on the best programs to help State and locale efforts in turning around the tide of addiction that is facing so many in this country. CARA is an important first step, but there is so much more work that needs to be done. I am encouraged that because of our efforts, this body has recognized the seriousness of this crisis.

I was particularly glad to advocate for \$1 billion in funding to address the heroin epidemic being included in the 21st Century Cures Act, which we are expected to pass and send to the President this week. I thank Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER for his incredible leadership in getting this important public health bill passed. The funding in the 21st Century Cures bill goes hand in hand with the important policy provisions in the CARA bill and will help save lives in New Hampshire and across this country.

Finally, I would like to return to the reason I ran for the Senate back in 2010: to make sure we leave New Hampshire and our Nation stronger and better off for the next generation. As the mother of two young children, I was increasingly concerned that, left unchecked, our skyrocketing national debt would ultimately burden future generations and diminish their opportunities.

I ran because I believed it was time for New Hampshire to bring some of its common sense here to Washington to deal with our Nation's spending habits. On every committee I served on, we looked for ways to cut wasteful spending and fought to hold the government accountable for the way it spends our hard-earned taxpayer dollars. It is my hope that this issue will be at the top of the agenda of the incoming Congress and the new administration. If there is anything I have learned in my time here, it is that it takes cooperation from both sides of the aisle to get things done.

It has been a privilege to serve with so many in this body who care about

our country deeply and work tirelessly each day on behalf of their constituents.

I am so honored as I see my colleagues who are here today, because I know how hard you work every day. I want to thank you for what you do on behalf of the people of this country. I am humbled by what I have learned from each of you and from each of my colleagues in the Senate and for the opportunity to serve with so many good people on behalf of our great Nation. I thank each of you for your dedicated service and, most of all, for your friendship.

Without leadership here, things just don't get done. I especially want to thank Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL for his commitment to making the Senate work and to making sure we are doing the people's business.

On a personal note, I have deeply appreciated his mentorship and his friendship.

Working with our new President, the Senate has a fresh opportunity to create a better quality of life for all Americans in this great country. That means elected leaders will need to work together and put aside our partisan differences.

During this election, we heard the frustrations of the American people with their government. They rightly expect this body to move forward in solving the significant challenges facing our Nation, such as getting our fiscal House in order, ensuring that families can afford quality health care without Washington between them and their doctors, reforming our broken Tax Code so we can keep and grow jobs here in the United States of America, and foremost, keeping America safe in a dangerous world.

My hope is that the Members of this body will appeal to the better angels of our nature, put partisanship aside, and focus on the challenge of building a more perfect union because the challenges before us are great and we cannot hope to overcome them unless we do so working hand in hand. I know my Senate colleagues are people of great character, and they are up to this challenge. I wish them the very best as they continue their very important work on behalf of the people of the greatest Nation on Earth.

To the people of New Hampshire, Joe and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the greatest honor of a lifetime, for serving you and for the privilege of serving in the United States Senate with so many good people.

Mr. President, I thank you, and I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULIVAN). The Senator from New Hampshire.

TRIBUTES TO KELLY AYOTTE

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased that I could be here for Senator AYOTTE's farewell address and honored to have had the opportunity to serve

with her over the past 6 years. Six years ago, I stood on this floor to recognize another departing Senator from New Hampshire, Judd Gregg. I said then about my relationship with Senator Gregg something that is also true about my relationship with Senator AYOTTE: that we always managed to disagree without being disagreeable. I am grateful to Senator AYOTTE for this, and I am proud that we have been able to maintain that civility and bipartisanship even in the course of two very close and very tough election cycles. That is the New Hampshire way—putting partisanship aside whenever possible and seeking practical, pragmatic solutions to address people's critical needs.

As she said, time and time again, Senator AYOTTE and I have teamed up to advance legislation of special importance to the Granite State, including strongly advocating for veterans, for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and for the New Hampshire National Guard and that new KC-46 tanker. Together, we fought to secure more resources for law enforcement and treatment professionals who are on the frontlines of the opioid crisis, including this week important new funding in the 21st Century Cures Act.

I want to publicly express my gratitude to KELLY for her dedicated service to the people of New Hampshire and, more broadly, the people of the United States. Over the last 6 years, Senator AYOTTE has earned respect on both sides of the aisle in this body and in New Hampshire. I know that her husband Joe and their two wonderful children, Kate and Jacob, are very, very proud of her service in the Senate. Looking to the future, there is no question in my mind that she will continue to serve the State and the country she loves.

KELLY, I wish you and your family all the best in the years ahead. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to my dear friend and colleague, the Senator from New Hampshire, KELLY AYOTTE. I first met KELLY in 2010 when I joined her for a townhall meeting in Nashua, NH. My affection for the State of New Hampshire dates back to my bid for President in 2000, so it was a familiar setting to join so many old friends in support of her campaign for the U.S. Senate. I was impressed with Senator AYOTTE's deep understanding of the top challenges facing the country, the seriousness with which she approached her work, and the ease with which she engaged with members of the audience, gracefully handling spirited debates and sparring matches with voters—a staple of the townhall meetings in New Hampshire I always admired. I knew then we would be fast friends.

In the Senate, Senator AYOTTE brought the same tenacity to her work, distinguishing herself as a rising star

in the Republican Party and a leader willing to work across party lines to get things done. Senator AYOTTE has approached every issue candidly and pragmatically—something that is all too often lacking in politics today. “I call them like I see them,” she once said. “And that means not just with the opposing party, but with my own party.” Senator AYOTTE took this mantra on the road, continuing the tradition of the New Hampshire townhall meetings by holding more than 50 townhall meetings in small towns and cities across New Hampshire, where she spoke directly with her constituents about the issues impacting their families.

But, in my view, Senator AYOTTE’s best work lies in her contribution to defense and national security as a member of the Armed Services Committee. Coming from a military family, her commitment to strengthening our Armed Forces is deeply personal. That has contributed to her tireless advocacy on issues important to New Hampshire, to Pease Air National Guard Base, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and to all military and civilian personnel supporting our national security who call New Hampshire home.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Readiness, Senator AYOTTE has called attention to the dangerous readiness crisis and has been a consistent advocate for making sure the men and women of our Armed Forces have the resources they need to defend the Nation. She has authored numerous legislative proposals to eliminate wasteful and duplicative spending in the Department of Defense so that we can reinvest the savings in rebuilding our military. She passed legislation to save over \$1 billion in the Pentagon’s budget and to keep U.S. tax dollars out of the hands of America’s enemies. She has been a leading advocate for repealing arbitrary budget cuts and the mindless mechanism of sequestration which continues to weaken our military and puts the lives of our servicemembers at greater risk.

Senator AYOTTE’s fight to prevent the Air Force from mothballing the A-10 Warthog attack planes showed the very best she has to offer. As the wife of a retired A-10 pilot who flew combat missions in Iraq and an expert in defense policy, Senator AYOTTE understood the critical role this aircraft plays in providing close air support for our fighting men and women. Year after year, she led the fight to prevent the Obama administration from following through on its plan to retire that fleet, pushing through measures in annual Defense authorization bills that would prevent any premature divestment of this aircraft. At the end of the day, she was right. The Air Force conceded to this aircraft’s value and reversed its decision, delaying any divestment until at least 2022.

Anyone who has watched Senator AYOTTE question a witness in the

Armed Services Committee will not be surprised to learn of her background as New Hampshire’s first female attorney general. I have been a fortunate observer of more than one occasion in which a bureaucrat withered under skilled cross-examination by Senator AYOTTE. She takes her oversight role extremely seriously and believes in holding our Nation’s leaders accountable.

In every way, Senator AYOTTE rose to meet the responsibilities and opportunities of her office. There are many qualities that are important to being a good Senator, but none, in my opinion, is more important than standing firm for what you believe. That is what Senator AYOTTE has done. She has never wavered in her commitment to principle, and this body is better for it.

On a more personal note, I have cherished the friendship and partnership of Senator KELLY AYOTTE. The kindness and courtesy she has extended to her colleagues has made this institution a better place, and her principled leadership has served as an example to all of us. In KELLY, you could always find a warm smile that served as a reminder that serving here is truly a joy and a privilege.

While I will miss KELLY’s presence in the Senate, I will continue to rely on her wise counsel and friendship, and I am confident our Nation will continue to benefit from her talents for many years to come. With this in mind, I thank my dear friend and valued colleague, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, for her service to the Nation and this body. And until the Nation calls on her again, I wish her and her husband Joe and their children, Katherine and Jacob, fair winds and following seas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I don’t have eloquent prepared remarks, as the chairman just delivered, but I will tell you this: I have been lucky enough to be in the trenches with KELLY AYOTTE, and when you are in the trenches with KELLY AYOTTE, there is something about her demeanor that lifts you up. It was a tough fight where we were outnumbered, particularly by our fellow women Senators, and it was hard. It was really hard and emotional, and every time I would walk up to KELLY in full-blown panic mode, this smile would radiate; the reassuring pat on my shoulder that we have the facts on our side, that the emotional arguments might be on the other side but the facts were on our side. It kept me strong and it kept me focused.

I will tell you three things I know in my heart about KELLY AYOTTE: She is a warrior, she is a class act, and she is my friend.

Thank you, KELLY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you very much.

Mr. President, I just want to attest to CLAIRE and KELLY—if I go to war, I want to go with you all because when

the bullets fly, you get tougher. I love all my colleagues, but sometimes the stress of the debate wears you down pretty quickly. The more contentious, the better you were.

So, KELLY, the best way we can pay you back is to keep up the fight and make sure that we have a fair military justice system and that commanders are accountable but they are still in charge.

An observation: For people with young kids, this has to be a tough job. I don’t have any children, but I can’t imagine the schedule if you have young kids. I have gotten to know KELLY, Joe, and Kate and Jake, and I can only imagine what it is like for Joe to be a single parent 3 days a week, running a business, trying to get kids off to school. I can tell you from being KELLY’s friend—and JOHN and I have traveled all over the world with KELLY—that was a constant strain for her. I am sure it is true of every young mother in America doing any job, but having to be gone and having to balance the needs of her kids and being a mom and a wife and all that good stuff—all I can tell you, for you and Joe—if you meet Kate and Jake, you all did good. If you meet these kids, it has been an enriching 6 years. They are full of life. I think you both handled it very well.

You should be proud of the long list of things you have accomplished. But I guess what I saw in you and what I wish more of us would embrace is an attitude that nothing is too hard, nothing is too challenging if you really believe you are here for a purpose.

You didn’t talk about immigration. I don’t blame you. The immigration fight is one of the hardest fights I have ever been in, particularly on our side. It is not easy on your side, but on our side it is really tough. KELLY was there pushing over the line a bill that I think made a lot of sense.

The debt. Everybody talks about it, but nobody wants to do anything about it. We have had a couple of sessions with 10 and 20 Senators trying to find a way to get more revenue and do entitlement reform, something like Simpson-Bowles. If you don’t do that, the country is going to become like Greece. Every time we had a meeting, every time we had a session about doing hard stuff, KELLY was there.

I remember sequestration. JEANNE SHAHEEN and KELLY AYOTTE were two of the six Senators trying to find a way to set aside these defense cuts in a balanced approach without destroying the military.

I think what you should be most proud of is that you served for 6 years and your kids are great, that you made a lot of friendships that will last a lifetime, and that your best days are yet to come.

You can tell the people of New Hampshire—or I will tell them for you if they can understand me. Apparently they couldn’t because I didn’t do that well when I ran for President. The bottom line is that KELLY never blinked.

She went into the sound of gunfire. She took on the hardest challenges. She did it with style and grace, and everybody in this body is better off for having met KELLY AYOTTE.

I look forward to working with you for years to come. The three amigos are now two, and there will never be a third amigo like you.

I yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, we have heard a lot of wonderful things about KELLY AYOTTE today and all are deserved. You notice they have come from both sides of the aisle, and they come from Members who were talking about her expertise on national security—as JOHN MCCAIN did eloquently—and homeland security.

I certainly have worked with her on those issues. I was with her on the Armed Services Committee when I first came to the Senate, and we are on the Homeland Security Committee now. She has been a champion for those issues, there is no question about it. She has helped to keep our country safer, and legislation that she has championed will help to make it safer for our kids and grandkids.

I have also worked with her on other issues, and I wish to talk about that for a second. One is this way in which we as a Chamber can ensure we are creating more jobs, being more energy independent, helping the environment, and that is energy efficiency. She has been a leader on that issue.

JEANNE SHAHEEN and I have legislation that we are still working to get all of it done, but we have gotten some of it done, and KELLY AYOTTE was a huge part of that. In fact, her legislation on Tenant Star is now law of the land. It is helping to make commercial buildings and office buildings, more energy efficient. Again, it has the added benefit of creating jobs and making the economy stronger while improving our environment. That is what she has led on as well.

I have also worked with her on issues you would expect someone who is a national security expert to lead on. Iran sanctions, she has taken the lead on some of the issues that resulted in the incredible vote we had on the floor of this Senate just a few days ago when virtually every Senator voted to extend those sanctions, but I have worked with her on another issue that has nothing to do with our national security; it has everything to do with our family security. It has to do with ensuring that people have the opportunity to achieve their God-given purpose in life. It has to do with stopping the deterioration of our communities, families being torn apart, and the enormous impact we have seen of the opioid epidemic. Starting often with prescription drugs, often leading to heroin—now synthetic heroins such as fentanyl, carfentanil, and U-4, these are very difficult issues.

I have seen no one in this Chamber who has a greater passion for this issue

than KELLY AYOTTE, and it comes out of experience. It is borne of experience of walking around New Hampshire communities with families who have lost a loved one. Earlier she talked about befriending a family who had lost their beautiful daughter to this horrible epidemic. It comes from going to the treatment centers and seeing the people who are in the trenches, saving lives, and improving lives. It comes from talking to those who at one point had great promise in their lives and got off track, seeing those people in a detox unit as she has done or seeing them in a treatment center or, promisingly, seeing them now in recovery and beginning to get their lives back together.

This is not an issue of Republicans or Democrats. It is not an issue that is political. It is an issue that is in the heart of KELLY AYOTTE because it affects the communities she knows in New Hampshire, the people she loves in New Hampshire, and now, sadly, our Nation.

On that issue, she has led, not just to draft legislation—and she talked about the CARE legislation which is going to change the dynamic and get the Federal Government to be a better partner with State and local and begin to turn this tide—not just the Cures legislation, which does have funding for the next 2 years to try to stop some of this horrible growth in addictions, overdoses and deaths, but she has done this house-to-house, family-to-family, person-to-person back home to give people hope and to help gather the support in communities around New Hampshire to fight back. She will continue to do that. She is not doing it as a U.S. Senator. After all, she is doing it as a mom, she is doing it as a citizen.

I am looking forward to continuing to work with her on that issue as well as the other issues we have talked about today. Her public service career is not over; in a sense, it is really just beginning. I know she will be active on the national security issues, on fighting against the heroin epidemic, on ensuring that we continue to have a safer and stronger country. I, for one, look forward to working with her on that.

I thank her for her service. I thank her, her kids, and Joe for their sacrifice because this isn't an easy job. It does take you away from your family. Yet, in 2009, she decided she was going to serve her country because she was worried about the direction it was going. She did that, she did it valiantly, and she deserves our praise today.

KELLY, we are going to miss you, but we also look forward to continuing to work with you on all of the issues that were talked about today. Thank you for your service.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be on the floor with my

colleagues today and most especially pleased to be here to honor my good friend KELLY AYOTTE as she leaves the Senate but does not leave public service.

Believe it or not, I first met KELLY on the softball field when we were on the Congressional women's softball team. I was in the House, and KELLY was the cocaptain in the Senate. We raised money for young survivors of breast cancer. I knew then I wanted to get to the Senate to be good friends with KELLY because when you talk about being in the trenches, she was such a competitor.

When you think about a team, a baseball team or a softball team, who is the toughest person on the team? Everybody wants to say the pitcher. In my view, it is the catcher. Guess who our catcher was. KELLY AYOTTE was and is, and so we became good friends then.

We found we have a lot of love for physical activities. We are both runners. We have run a couple of times together. We participate in the 3-mile run that we have every May that determines who is the fastest male Senator, who is the fastest woman Senator. Well, guess who the fastest woman Senator is. You got it. She just blew right by me every year so I might have hope next year. I don't know. I will have to check out the newcomers. But KELLY was always such a great competitor on the softball field, running in 5Ks, and just being around in general.

As we have heard from everybody, you have served your State with integrity and passion. I know it is tough on your family. I see Joe in the Gallery. I have met your beautiful children, Kate and Jake. I have heard you on the phone planning daycare while the rest of us are figuring out how we are going to get home that night or what we are doing in our committees. As a young mother, KELLY is still trying to make the ends meet. I have such admiration for that as a mother myself. I know how difficult it is, but I know the three of them know that no matter if you were here figuring that out, they were always No. 1 in your heart. I think that is a real tribute to you.

We have heard all of the issues she has been so out front on. Particularly as I am from a State like West Virginia—the opioid issue has really impacted our rural areas. When I visited KELLY twice over the last 6 months in New Hampshire, it was the same kind of impact. It is small towns, families, people who know each other. It hurts everybody. KELLY, thank you for your leadership there. That is going to make not just a mark in your State but across our Nation and in my State in particular.

We traveled to Gitmo together. I had never been to Gitmo before. To have an expert such as KELLY explain to me and to hear her question what is going on there and how important it is and was, she continues to be in the fight that she led to make sure we don't have terrorists on our own home soil. The fact

that Gitmo is still open and is still functioning to keep those very dangerous folks off of our shores I think is a tribute to KELLY's leadership.

In terms of New Hampshire, as you move away from here, I know you are going to realize how you have impacted the people where you live and in your home State, but just kind of multiply that all over the Nation. We have a huge debt of gratitude to you and your family for being here for 6 years, but as I have told you repeatedly since the election, this is not the last time we are going to hear from KELLY AYOTTE or about KELLY AYOTTE. To me, that is a very strengthening thing when I talk about my friend.

I am not going to say goodbye because I don't think we will be saying goodbye. I am going to say Godspeed, good luck. You will land on your feet because you always do. Keep running, I will keep running, and maybe I can keep running and improve my time so I can at least see the backs of your feet as you are running past me.

It has been a real privilege to serve with you. It has been great to be your friend, and I look forward to keeping our relationship very viable and alive as the time moves on.

Thanks, KELLY.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, like my friends on both sides of the aisle, I, too, come to the floor to say a few words about my friend and mentor, Senator KELLY AYOTTE. I use the word "mentor" in actually an official capacity. When you come to the Senate—and like you, Madam President, I am part of the new class of 2014. When you come to the Senate, you are assigned a mentor. I think the idea is that you come in, you are clueless, you don't really know what is going on, and so you have somebody who is smart and experienced to mentor you. Everybody gets a mentor.

I was very fortunate to have KELLY AYOTTE as my mentor. I certainly learned a lot from her. She took the time to help me understand how this important body works. We talked about things like work life balance—with somebody such as KELLY who has kids.

It wasn't just those kinds of issues. I had the great opportunity to serve on a couple of very important committees with Senator AYOTTE—on the Armed Services Committee, on the Commerce Committee—and like my colleague from Missouri, I really learned a lot watching her in action. She was always prepared, always engaged, and always tenacious when it came to certain witnesses. Of course, like a lot of us, we shared certain passions for our country—certainly a strong national defense.

My State, like a lot of States such as New Hampshire, is suffering from the opioid crisis. Watching her and Senator PORTMAN literally lead the country on this issue was so important.

I end by saying what I really learned from my mentor was from watching the way she dealt with other people, the way she always treated people with respect, with class, with optimism, and with dignity. That is probably more important than anything, not only in the U.S. Senate but in our country.

I thank KELLY as a mentor. She was a great role model not only for me but all of the 13 Members of the class of 2014. I know she will be serving her country and her State in a lot more ways. I look forward to watching that and continuing to call her my good friend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Maryland.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to take the floor for what I call my summing-up speech. It is not my farewell speech because I have the honor and privilege of being the ranking member and former chairman of the Appropriations Committee. I will speak later on this week when we move the continuing resolution.

It is the practice and the tradition of the Senate that when a Senator is departing the Senate, they give what they call their farewell address. Well, mine is not going to be as memorable as when George Washington resigned his commission or other memorable speeches, but I do want to say words about how I feel today about having the great opportunity to serve in the Congress.

I have spent 30 years in the Senate, 10 years in the House of Representatives, and, yes, 5 years in the Baltimore City Council. I have served in elected public office for 45 years. More than half of my life has been in elected public service but, at the same time, all of my life has been focused on service.

I rise today to thank the people of Maryland. I rise to thank them for their vote of confidence. When people vote for you, it is not only that they are sending you to Washington or sending you to city hall. They are giving you a vote of confidence that you will be their voice, that you will be their vote, that you will be at their side and on their side, and that is what I want to be able to talk about today.

The people of Baltimore gave me my first shot at running for the Baltimore City Council. When I beat the political bosses, when running for political office as a woman was considered a novelty, they said: You don't look the part. But I said: This is what the part looks like, and this is what the part is going to be like. Along the way, so many people helped me. Behind "me" is a whole lot of "we."

I got started in public life because of volunteers and activists who, on their own time and on their own dime, volunteered themselves to not only help me get elected but to be involved in their communities, to be civically engaged, to make their community and their country a better place. These are

the people who were behind me. Well, guess what. No, I was behind them, because they certainly have led the way.

Along the way, there were people who also not only helped me get elected, but they helped me govern—people who, again, volunteered their own time. I had a wonderful service academy board that helped me pick the best and the brightest to serve in our military academies—people with distinguished careers in either the military or in education. I had a judicial appointment advisory board that made sure I helped nominate the best people to serve in the Federal judiciary. Also, I had a veterans advisory group that brought to me what was really happening to the veterans, not what was in the press releases from the Veterans' Administration. Of course, I had a fabulous strategy group that functioned as a kitchen cabinet. It was a kitchen cabinet. We spent a lot of time cooking things up to try to make our country and our communities better places. So I thank them all for what they did.

But, when we come here to try to serve the people who sent us here, we cannot do it alone. So we have a fabulous staff, both that serves us in Washington and serves us in our State. I wish to thank my current staff: my chief of staff, Shannon Kula; my deputy chief of staff, Rachel MacKnight; my State director, Nichelle Schoultz; my legislative director, Brigid Houton; my communications director, Matt Jorgenson; my scheduling director, Catie Finley; my office manager, Josh Yearsley; my appropriations staff director, Chuck Kieffer; and my appropriations deputy staff director, Jean Toal Eisen; and of course, all of my staff in my State office who helped me.

There is also the support staff who made sure that the phones got answered. You didn't get one of those "call 1, call 2, press 7, press 184," et cetera. Also, there are the people who answer the mail, whether it was snail mail, which so much of it was when I came, or email, because we really believed that we needed to be here for the people.

I called their names, but there are also others who filled those jobs throughout my time in public office. They worked very hard to make sure that we could represent the people of Maryland and to be on their side.

After 45 years, though, it is time for me to say goodbye to elected office, but not to service.

I have the high privilege of being the longest serving woman in congressional history. But I say it is not how long you serve but how well you serve. For those who know me and have been to rallies and so on, they know that I say: "I am here to work on the macro issues and I am here to work on the macaroni and cheese issues"—to work on the big picture, to make sure that the people's day-to-day needs were converted into public policy or, while we are working on public policy, to try to help our communities.

We also have to remember in our own States that we have constituent service issues. One of the things I am really proud of is my constituent service staff, where if you were a veteran and you needed help or you had a Social Security or Medicare problem, you could call Senator BARB and you didn't feel that you had to go to a \$100 fundraiser or know somebody who had connections. The only connection you needed was a phone. You didn't even need Wi-Fi. You could just call me. Summer, winter, spring, or fall, they had Senator BARB. I tried to be of service because service was in my DNA. I was raised to think about service.

My mother and father ran a small neighborhood grocery store in one of Baltimore's famous row house neighborhoods. Every day they would get up, and they would open that grocery store and say to their customers: Good morning. Can I help you?

Now, in running that business, they also wanted to be sure that they were connected to the community. We weren't a big-box shop. We were a shop for the little people. If anybody was in difficulty, my father was happy to extend credit. It was called: We will write your name down in a book. Pay us when you can. Don't worry that you got laid off at Bethlehem Steel. We know that your wife had a difficult childbirth and needs this extra stuff. We are here to help.

My father would say: BARBARA, deliver those groceries. Take it down in that little red wagon I got for you. With my little red wagon, I would maybe take orange juice down to a shut-in, but my father would say: Don't take a tip. But the tip he gave me was to always be of service and to treat people fair and square.

The other place where I learned so much about service was from the nuns who taught me. I had the great fortune to go to Catholic schools. I was taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame and the Sisters of Mercy. These wonderful women, who led the consecrated life, taught us not only about reading, writing, and arithmetic, but they taught us religion and emphasized the Beatitudes. If anybody reads the Scripture, if you go to Matthew 5 and you go to the Beatitudes, you know what has shaped us. One of them is this: Blessed are those who are meek at heart. I had to really work at that one—really, really work at that one. At the same time, there were those who said: those who hunger and thirst after justice. That is what motivated me. It was focusing on the values of faith, like love your neighbor, care for the sick, and worry about the poor.

I was also inspired by a motto from something called the Christopher Movement, where you would help carry the burden. It said: "It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness." That is what was motivating me to service.

You see, we really believed in America in my family, and we really be-

lieved in it in my community. When my great grandmother came to this country from Poland in 1886, she had little money in her pocket, but she had big dreams in her heart. Women didn't even have the right to vote. One hundred years to the year that she landed in this country, I landed in the Senate. That is what opportunity means in the United States of America.

I never thought I would come into politics. Growing up in Baltimore, my family wasn't involved in politics. My family was involved more in church work, philanthropy, doing good works in the way they did their business. In Baltimore in those days, there were political bosses—guys with pot bellies who smoked cigars and did deals, et cetera—and that wasn't going to be me. I thought I would go into the field of social work.

But I got involved because they wanted to put a 16-lane highway through the European ethnic neighborhoods of Baltimore and not even give the people relocation benefits, and they were going to smash and bulldoze the first African-American home-ownership neighborhood in Baltimore, in a community called Rosemont.

I said: Look, we can fight this. We just have to give ourselves a militant name.

I helped put together a group called SCAR, or the Southeast Council Against the Road. Our African-American neighbors were on the other side of town, and they had a group called RAM, or Relocation Action Movement. Then the citywide coalition had a group called MAD, or Movement Against Destruction. So you see, I have always had a certain flair about these things.

So we did take on city hall. But the more I knocked on doors—and our community did—we weren't heard. So I decided: the heck with it. If I knocked on a door and I wasn't going to be heard, I was going to knock on the door to get elected, and that is what I did—knocking on doors, putting together a coalition, defying the odds, defying what people said: You can't win. No woman can win in an ethnic, hard-hat neighborhood. No woman can win who isn't part of the political machine. And no woman could win who had been active in the civil rights movement. I said: Guess what. We defied the odds, and we denied the odds, and that is how I came into public office—a champion on behalf of the people.

I wanted to come to be an advocate for people to have better lives, to have better livelihoods and better neighborhoods, to be able to save jobs and to do what I could to be able to help them. I knew that to do that I had to show up, stand up, and speak up for my constituents, staying close enough to the people so they wouldn't fall between the cracks and meeting their day-to-day needs and the long-range needs of the Nation.

When I came to the Senate, I was the very first woman elected in her own

right. Though I was all by myself, I was never alone. When I came, there was only one other woman here—the wonderful and distinguished colleague from Kansas, Senator Nancy Kassebaum, a wonderful colleague. When I say I was by myself as the only woman in the Democratic caucus, I say I was never alone because of the great men that we could work with in the Senate.

Now, I have had the privilege to work with two of the best men in America. Senator Paul Sarbanes, who was my senior Senator when I came and who certainly was my champion, helped me to get on the right committees and convinced everybody that my name was BARB MIKULSKI and not Bella Abzug. But I was a little bit of both. As to Senator Sarbanes and now, of course, Senator BEN CARDIN, who also has been at my side, we have worked together on issues related to Maryland both large and small.

But there were others who taught me, like Senator Byrd, Senator Kennedy, and others. What it was all about was being able to work for jobs and for justice.

Though I was the first Democratic woman, I wanted to be the first of many. I wanted to help women get elected to the Senate and do what I could to be able to help them to do that. It has been just wonderful to see that now there are 20 women who are currently serving in the Senate. One of the great joys has been to work to help empower them so that they can be a powerhouse. That is why we have those power workshops that struck fear into the hearts of the guys—not to worry about us but to keep an eye on us.

I have been proud of what I have learned, taking the values that I had growing up and trying to put them in the Federal lawbooks, because, for me, no issue was too small to take up, and no cause was too big for me to not take on.

I firmly believe that the best ideas come from the people. That is where some of my greatest accomplishments came from. One of the things I loved the most was being in Maryland, moving around the State, going to all of the counties in the State. I loved my Mondays in Maryland, where I could meet and go into unannounced places like diners. A lot of people like to do townhalls, and they are terrific, but I like to show up at a diner, go from table to table to table and not only eyeball the french fries but listen to what the people have to say.

The other thing that I really liked was roundtables—absolutely those roundtables—where you could engage in conversation with people and listen to them, not show off how smart or cool you were. I really loved doing that. Out of it came some of my first big accomplishments.

When I came to the U.S. Senate, my father was quite ill with Alzheimer's. My father was a wonderful man. He worked hard for my sisters and me so that we would have an education. He

saw his role as a protector and provider, and by providing us an education, we could always take care of ourselves.

When he became so ill and went into a nursing home, I listened to other families who would come to visit people in long-term care. We saw that the very cruel rules of our own government were forcing people to spend down their entire life savings and put in their family home or their family farm as an asset base. Well, listening to them, BARBARA MIKULSKI said this: Family responsibility—yes, you need to take responsibility for your family, but the cruel rules of government should never push a family into family bankruptcy. So I crafted something called the spousal anti-im impoverishment rules that enable elderly couples to keep their assets and keep their home. AARP tells me that since that legislation passed over 20 years ago, we have helped 1 million seniors not lose their homes or their family farms because one becomes too ill because of that dreaded A-word or Parkinson's or others. That is what I mean about the best ideas coming from the people.

Then I also listened to women who worked hard every single day yet weren't getting equal pay for equal work. Of course we heard it from Lilly Ledbetter, but we heard it from lots of Lillies, and we heard it from lots of Roses and lots of Marys and lots of Otanias and lots of Marias. That is why we worked hard to pass the equal pay for equal work act.

Working together with Senator Nancy Kassebaum, Olympia Snowe, our friends over in the House, Connie Morella, Pat Schroeder, we also found that women were being excluded from the protocols of NIH. The famous study to take an aspirin and keep a heart attack away was done on 10,000 male medical students, not one woman. So Olympia, Connie, Pat, BARB showed up at NIH and pounded the table and said: Let's start practicing good science instead of bad stereotypes and make sure we are included where we should be in a legitimate, scientific way. Out of that came the appointment of Bernadine Healy as the head of NIH; out of that came the Office of Research on Women's Health at NIH; and out of that came the famous hormone replacement study that Dr. Healy championed. Then Tom Harkin and Arlen Specter helped us get money in the Federal checkbook.

One study changed medical practice and lowered breast cancer rates in this country by 15 percent. Wow. That is what working together does—to try to save lives a million at a time. That was on women's health.

Then we saw growing concerns about the issue of the high cost of college. The first mortgage many of our kids are facing is their student loans. Working together with the other side of the aisle, we created AmeriCorps, making sure we enabled people to be able to be of service to our country and earn a

voucher to pay down their student loans.

Then there was a roundtable where I met with parents of special needs children, and a mother asked me to change the law from "retardation" to "intellectual disability" because she was being bullied. Well, I came back here and drafted legislation. Again, on the other side of the aisle was MIKE ENZI, who worked with me to pass that.

Rosa now is a member of the Special Olympics. She wins medals. She was Person of the Week on TV. That is what Mondays in Maryland means. It is worth everything to do things like that.

In Maryland, we worked along with Senators Sarbanes and Hardin to clean up the bay. We worked to make sure our port was viable. We worked not only on our Port of Baltimore for ships of commerce, but also we worked on the space community at Goddard. I am so proud of the fact that I worked very hard to save the Hubble Space Telescope. That Hubble Space Telescope turned out to be the richest contact lens in world history. But again, with astronaut Senators Jake Garn and John Glenn working together, we did it, and it ensured America's premier leadership in astronomy and in space for years and for several decades.

Over the years, though, I could go through accomplishment after accomplishment, but one of the things I have learned as my lesson in life is that the best ship you could sail on in life is something called friendship. It is friendship that makes life worth living. It enables life to have the value of giving. That is what friendship is. When I think about the friends along the way whom I have met both in my hometown and my State, there are also those who are here, people who on both sides of the aisle are absolutely so important to me—and the fact that we have worked on both sides of the aisle.

I spoke about Senator CARDIN and Senator Sarbanes. But also on the Senate Appropriations Committee, it was Senator SHELBY and Senator Kit Bond; we could actually work together. We put our heads together to try to come up with real solutions for real problems, and we could do that.

The other is not to judge one another because we have a party label. I am so darned sick of that. In the year of the women, so many came—like BARBARA BOXER and PATTY MURRAY and DIANNE FEINSTEIN, also Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, who came from Texas. I got a call from Senator Hutchison one day, and my staff said: Ew, she wants to work with you on something. Ew, ew. She is a conservative from Texas and she wants to do something for women.

I said: How about if we listen? Could we start with listening? Could we start with just listening?

Senator Hutchison had a fabulous idea on IRA contributions. In those days, if you were in the marketplace, you could put in \$2,000, but if you worked full-time at home, you could

put in only \$500. What Senator Hutchison wanted to do was to make it have parity—that old word, "parity." I said yes. Our staffs told us not to work with each other, but we were going to forge ahead.

We went out to dinner to talk over strategy, but we talked together about our lives, how she got her start, obstacles she faced. We had such a good time that we said: Let's invite other women. Well, that became the famous dinners—the famous dinners that the women of the Senate have. We knew we would never be a caucus because we were not uniform in our views or the way we voted, but what we wanted to be was, No. 1, a zone of civility where we would treat each other with respect, our debates would be observed with intellectual rigor, and when the day was over, the day would be over. Those dinners have now stood the test of time, and I am so proud of them.

I have been so proud to work with my colleague, the senior Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, who has been such a friend and such an ally. Though we are not a caucus, we are a force when we can come together. We have made change, and we have made a difference. That doesn't go down in the roll books, but I think it certainly should go down in the history books.

So as I get ready to leave the Senate, what will I miss? Well, I will never have another job as consequential as this. This is pretty consequential. The fate of this country, and maybe even the world, lies in the hands of the Congress of the U.S. Senate.

I will miss the people in the Senate the wonderful professional staff, but I am also going to miss the doorkeepers, the elevator operators, the cafeteria workers, the police officers who say: In helping the one, we help the many. We learn so much from them; I have learned so much from them.

I learned a lot from the elevator operators. One was a lady of very modest means who every day would say to me and to all of us, "Have a blessed day." What a great gift she gave us: "Have a blessed day."

Another elevator operator, who himself has recovered from very challenging health issues, always cheerful, asks, "How is your day?" The last thing you could do is to not return a smile. Those are the kinds of people whom I will always remember, all those helping hands.

So I say to my colleagues now that I will never, ever forget you. Helen Keller, though she was blind, was a great visionary, and she said that all that you deeply love you never lose. And all whom I have ever met have become a part of me; each and every one of you have become a part of me. Everybody I met along the way, whether it was at roundtables or the elevator operators, have become a part of me. You shaped me, and you have helped me become a better person.

So when I wrap up and people say "Well, what do you think you are going

to do, Barb," I will say my plan is not a job description but a life description. Every day I am going to learn something new. Every day I am going to give something back. Every day I am going to do something where I keep an old friend or make a new one. I want to thank God that I live in the United States of America, which enabled me to do this.

In conclusion, George Bernard Shaw—I don't know how he would have felt about me, but he wrote this, and I think it is pretty good. He said this:

I am [of the opinion] that my life belongs to the [whole] community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

For the harder I work, the more I live. I will rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no "brief candle" to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

God bless the United States Senate, and God bless the United States of America.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

TRIBUTES TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, yesterday I had an opportunity on the floor to talk about Senator MIKULSKI, but I just want to take 1 minute—because I know a lot of my colleagues want to speak—to thank her on behalf of the people of Maryland.

Yesterday I was with Senator MIKULSKI at the inauguration of Catherine Pugh, our new mayor of Baltimore. As is the tradition on programs, the senior Senator speaks and then the junior Senator speaks, so I had the opportunity to speak after the dynamic remarks of Senator MIKULSKI. That has been a burden that I have had now for 10 years. As I pointed out to the people of Maryland, we are losing one of the great giants and advocates for our State, and that is going to be a great loss. The only benefit I can see is that I will not have to follow Senator MIKULSKI on the program in the future.

We are living part of a legacy, and we know that. We know that what we do here in the U.S. Senate one day will be recorded in the history of our country. I know that Senator MIKULSKI will be mentioned frequently for her incredible accomplishments here in the U.S. Senate.

On a personal basis, I just wanted to express that my life in the U.S. Senate has been special. For all of us, being in the Senate is special, but my enjoyment, productivity, and life in the Senate has been made so much greater because of my seatmate and friend, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, it is with deep affection, admiration, and appreciation that I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to our colleague and my dear friend, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, as her service in

the Senate comes to a close. As the longest serving woman in the history of the United States Congress—30 years in this Chamber, in addition to 10 years in the House—she has earned the gratitude of the people of her beloved Maryland and of the entire Nation. That gratitude is based on much more than simple arithmetic, much more than just how many years she has served here, impressive though that is. In reflecting on her service, it is difficult to decide where to begin—her accomplishments, her vision, or her complete dedication to the people she serves, the dedication that began in that neighborhood in Baltimore that she describes so passionately today. No matter where we begin, we end up in the same place—it is all about her character.

Perhaps the best way to describe Senator MIKULSKI's character is by noting that she is not only officially the longest serving woman in the history of the Congress, but she is also unofficially the dean of the women in the Senate. That title perfectly demonstrates the trust and respect she has earned her from her colleagues. As a brandnew Senator in 1997, I was one of those tutored by this accomplished and experienced dean. At that time, Senator MIKULSKI had already been in the House and the Senate for a combined 20 years. She didn't know me from Adam—or perhaps I should say from Eve—yet, despite the difference in our seniority, our States, and our parties, she took me under her wing. She was one of the first people who called me after I was sworn in as a new Senator. I was so grateful for her kindness and her wisdom. She invited me to a power workshop in her office, along with Mary Landrieu, the other woman who was elected that year. She taught me the ropes of the appropriations process and instituted regular bipartisan dinners for the women of the Senate.

In the years since then, I have come to know her as a fighter, a trailblazer, and a person of such integrity.

Maybe it is all those years with the nuns that taught you that.

It has been a privilege to work with her on such vital issues as home health care, maritime issues, higher education, pay equality, and an issue near and dear to both of us, Alzheimer's research. Serving with her on the Appropriations Committee, I have witnessed firsthand what an extraordinary leader she is—fair, openminded, yet with firm expectations and a clear sense of direction.

Senator MIKULSKI is, above all, a hard worker. Growing up in East Baltimore, she learned the value of hard work in her family's grocery store, as we have heard today. Her commitment to making a difference in her neighborhood led her to become a social worker, helping at-risk children and our seniors. The statement she made sums up her approach to serving in Congress: "I was a social worker for Baltimore families. Now I'm a social worker building opportunities for families throughout America."

Two years ago, I was honored to stand alongside Senator BARB to accept Allegheny College Prize for Civility in Public Life. We were representing all of the women of the Senate for our leadership in bringing an end to the devastating government shutdown of 2013 and working together on so many other issues.

With our dean setting the example, we have always rejected the idea of a women's caucus because we, like the men in the Senate, span the ideological spectrum. Who would expect otherwise? We have worked together across party lines to serve all Americans. As Senator MIKULSKI puts it "It's not about gender, it's about the agenda." In fact, all of us have our favorite sayings that the Senator from Maryland has taught us, and we will miss her way with words so much.

When Senator MIKULSKI reached her Senate longevity milestone 5 years ago, she surpassed my personal role model in public service, the legendary Senator from Maine, Margaret Chase Smith. Just as the great lady from Maine inspired me and countless other young women of my generation to serve, the great lady from Maryland inspires the young women of today, always encouraging them to go for it.

Throughout her life in public service, she has lived by one guiding principle: to help our people meet the needs of today as she helps our Nation prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

What an honor it has been to serve alongside Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. I have learned so much from her. I will never forget the day she told me I had the soul of an appropriator, which I knew was the highest compliment she could give me. And she was right. We have worked on that committee to get so much done.

I wish her many more years of health, happiness, and, most of all, that most important "ship," friendship.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, before Senator COLLINS leaves the floor, I want to thank Senator COLLINS for her beautiful remarks about BARBARA MIKULSKI. As I leave here, I have said publicly—the press has asked: What is your hope?

I often say: My hope is with the Senator from Maine, Senator COLLINS, to bridge some of the partisan divides.

It has been an honor to serve with you. I know you have a lot on your shoulders as we move forward.

Senator MIKULSKI, I want to take a few minutes to talk about you. Some Senators have focus and drive. Some have compassion. Some have empathy. Some have sharp negotiating skills. Some have a quick wit. Some are great students of history. Some are champions for the least among us. Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, you are all of these things. You are everything a Senator should be and more. As my mentor, as my treasured friend, you have been a

major influence in my career. Honestly, I can say I would not be here as a United States Senator without your guidance.

One of my favorite things about BARBARA is her wonderful sense of humor. It is legendary. She is hilarious when she wants to be.

When I was in the House of Representatives, I was fighting to integrate the all-male House gym. The room to which they had assigned the women was about 6 by 6, and it had showers and hair dryers. You know the big hair dryers that come over your head like that? It had no exercise equipment. It had no space. It was the size of a shoebox. We women decided we needed some exercise, so we packed into the tiny room.

There was then-Congresswoman MIKULSKI, Congresswoman Ferraro, Congresswoman Schroeder, Barbara Kennelly, Olympia Snowe, who looked like she had just stepped out of *Vogue* magazine. I was in my sweat suit, and so was BARB. The teacher was leading us in an aerobics class, and she said: Put your hands above your head. We did it. She said: Put your hands out on the side. We did it. Then she said: Put your hands on your hips and bend at the waist. And with that, BARBARA yelled: "Look, if I had a waist, I wouldn't be here." That is my BARB. She can use laughter to defuse any situation. I will always love her for it.

When I started thinking about my own long shot bid for the Senate—and it was worse than a long shot—the first person I went to after my family was BARB. It was a few years after she had made history by becoming the first Democratic woman ever elected in her own right to the U.S. Senate. She got right to the point: "How old are you, Babs?"—using the nickname she calls me to this day. I told her I was almost 50.

God, that sounds so young, BARBARA.

I told her I was almost 50. I explained it was going to be a tough fight. I was up against two powerful male opponents in the Democratic primary, and I was an asterisk in the polls. What was her response? She looked at me and she said: "Go for it. It's worth the fight you'll have to wage to get here. And it will be a fight." And it was.

In 1992, four new women came to the Senate, and who was waiting for us with open arms? Senator MIKULSKI. And this is what she said: "Some women stare out the window waiting for Prince Charming. I stared out the window waiting for more women Senators—and it is finally happening!" That is who BARBARA is. She never set out to make a name for herself. She wanted to blaze a trail that was wide enough for all of us to follow.

Just days after I won that first Senate race, she sent all the new women Senators a guidebook she herself had written about how to get started in the Senate, how to get on committees. She invited us to her office for lessons on Senate procedure and how to set up our offices. She had covered everything.

In the years since, as you have heard, she has hosted regular dinners for all the women in the Senate—Democratic and Republican alike. We reach across party lines and come together because of her. We talk about our work, our families. We share our struggles and our triumphs. What is said there stays there.

Senator MIKULSKI has led us by example, showing us how to build coalitions, how to bridge the partisan divide, which includes strong partnership with our male colleagues, whom she calls "Sir Galahads." She has also shown us how to stand up and make our voices heard. As she says, go "earring to earring" with our opponents and "put on our lipstick, square our shoulders, suit up and fight." Legendary Mikulski words.

To me, Senator MIKULSKI is the whole package—a skilled, intelligent negotiator, a Senator who fights for the people, and a woman who helps other women. She is our cherished leader, and that is why she will always be known as the dean of the Senate women.

When BARBARA announced she would be leaving the Senate, I wrote her a rhyme. I love to write rhymes and lyrics. I wrote her the following rhyme: Before Mikulski won the day,
A guy would have to pass away,
And then his wife would take his place.
Finally, a woman in a Senate space.
But Barb she got there in her own right.
First Democratic gal to win that fight.
She won the race and joined the misters.
But finally NOW she has nineteen sisters!

BARBARA, next year, because of what you started, because of the people you encouraged, there will be 21 women in the Senate—a record. Sitting here in my chair, my seat, will be an incredible woman.

Senator MIKULSKI, BARB, my treasured mentor, my dear friend, thank you for everything. We have been through battles together. I am forever grateful to you, and I will always treasure our friendship.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I thank the gentlelady from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I like "gentlelady."

Ms. MIKULSKI. That is the way we talk here. I thank the gentlelady from California for her kind words. We have been together through thick, thin, and the attempt to get thin, and that story about bending at the waist is a true one.

I am not the person with the best hairdo or sleek or chic, but one of the things I have so admired about my friend is her authenticity. We first got to know each other in the House, and then I encouraged you to come to the Senate, which certainly was the right thing to do. You are yourself. You are true to yourself, you are true to your beliefs. You are true to your constituents, and you are true to the Constitution. You are such a true, blue person.

There are many words to describe you, such as outspoken, feisty, and all of that, but I would say the word that describes you best is "authenticity." You are who you are. The people of California have loved you for it and sent you to the Congress.

We started out together basically in city council roles, sometimes called the pothole parliament. It has been a pleasure to serve with the Senator from California. I have watched you stand up for your beliefs, and along the way, as you stood up for your beliefs, you made believers of us all.

Godspeed to you, BARBARA. We are friends forever.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I wish to speak about Senator MIKULSKI and then also Senator BOXER, the two great Senator BARBARAS who have been such giants in the Senate. We are so grateful to both of them.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

Madam President, I do have to say that among the many things with which I have been honored and have appreciated was when Senator MIKULSKI accepted my offer to stay at the Stabenow bed and breakfast after long session nights and days when the Appropriations Committee was negotiating and doing the incredible work that had to be done. I had the honor of being able to put up a plaque in my home that says: Senator BARB slept here. I will always be honored to have had that opportunity on top of all of the other ways we have worked together.

It really is an honor to stand here. I can't imagine the Senate without Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BOXER. I can't imagine the Senate without the incredible service of my dear friend and colleague, who is our dean in every sense of the word—the senior Senator from the State of Maryland. For over 30 years she has worked tirelessly. We know that. We hear it every day. We know what the people in Baltimore, the Chesapeake Bay area, and all of Maryland care about. She has been fighting and standing up for them every single moment of every single day. I so admire that, and I am so grateful. She has been a wonderful inspiration and mentor to me. We have all heard about our dinners and the power briefings on appropriations. She has been a continual source of inspiration and a mentor to me.

She reached out to me, as she does to all of our colleagues, when I was first elected. She welcomed me and showed me what it meant to be a good Senator representing my State of Michigan and how to get things done. Senator MIKULSKI has always been willing to lend a helping hand and has never given up when it comes to fighting for the people she represents and being a trailblazer.

I came into the Senate with a master's degree in social work. Senator MIKULSKI has often said that we are the

two official do-gooders in the Senate. We have taken our interest from helping people individually to another level by becoming policymakers, thereby giving us the opportunity to touch more lives by using our skills and our background in education as well.

We all know—but I think it is important to remind ourselves—that she was only 26 when Senator MIKULSKI talked about the highway proposal that would have destroyed a neighborhood full of working people. She spoke up. She was noticed, and she wasn't afraid to say exactly what she was thinking. She was and is absolutely fearless in every good sense of that word. She brought that fearlessness to the Senate. That fearlessness made her the first woman to serve as chair of the Appropriations Committee of the Senate. It doesn't get more important than that in setting policy and having an impact on people's lives in our country by prioritizing the interests of the American people in every funding decision. That fearlessness was on display when she helped bring us closer to the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, making it closer to having equal pay for equal work than it has ever been before.

Senator MIKULSKI fought for health care. I was proud to join her in making sure that women could receive preventive care without a copay. She made sure that women were truly represented and that our needs were met in health care reform, and that will continue to impact all of the lives of women across the country.

When she turned her eyes to the stars, wondering what was up there, she made sure that the Goddard Space Flight Center was a leader in exploring the unknown. Like the supernova named after her, she has absolutely astonished us with her brilliance, and nothing will be quite the same after she leaves here.

Her work in the Senate has made it possible for so many women and girls across America to put their hat in the ring and say: I want to run for office, and I can do it.

Senator MIKULSKI said it best—there are so many wonderful quotes I will always use—when she said: Put your lipstick on, square your shoulders, and suit up. Go into the fight and get things done. That has become a mantra for us in working together.

I thank Senator BARB. You will be greatly missed, but I know you have so much more to give. I know you will always make a difference in people's lives in every single thing you do every single day, and we will be forever grateful.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, again, I thank the gentlelady from Michigan. We both have master's degrees in social work. I joke, but I am actually serious when I say we are certified do-gooders. When people hear about social work, they sometimes think it is about giving money away, but it is really about trying to help people build lives, build families, and

therefore build the Nation. The Senator from Michigan's championship in that area has been amazing to me.

I am so glad my friend from Michigan is here in the Senate, whether she is standing up for the people in Flint, MI, so they have safe drinking water, or standing up for those who need help in the area of food and nutrition so there aren't food deserts in communities. That is one of the biggest public health initiatives. If you are a diabetic, you can't comply if all you can get is fast food and french fries. If you are a child, you need good food and good nutrition. My friend knows more than anybody that you need to feed the body, the mind, and the spirit, and she has certainly done that. It has been great being your pal and partner.

Many people don't know this, but Senator CARDIN and I commute every day. When those appropriation cycles got pretty late, after midnight, the gentlelady from Michigan offered her home to me. We had a saying: Stop whining and have a glass of wine. There was nothing like being able to talk about your day with a colleague who will offer inspiration and encouragement at the end of the day. My friend offered her home, but she has really fought for so many people to have a home and a community in order to have what they need so they can learn and prosper in this country.

I just wish you so much and wish you all the best.

Thank you very much.

BARBARA BOXER

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, as her name suggests, Senator BOXER has always been a fighter, a champion for the people of California, and a good friend.

Though Senator BOXER began her life in Brooklyn, California has always been her home.

It is where she got elected to the Marin County Board of Supervisors, becoming the first woman to hold the board's presidency.

It is where she first got elected to the House of Representatives, where she quickly rose and became a leader we could all aspire to be.

And as Senator, she has worked tirelessly for families, children, consumers, everyone in the State of California and Americans everywhere.

Senator BOXER has always been a wonderful mentor to me, and she has been relentless on moving forward on some of the most critically important issues of our time.

As the first woman to chair the Environment and Public Works Committee, she has provided the support that has kept America's air and water safe and to fight climate change. She defended mercury and lead standards and installed choking warnings on packages.

I will personally always be grateful for her tireless advocacy and support for the 100,000 Flint citizens who have been poisoned by lead in their water.

We have her to thank when we know that children and families all over the

country can be safer and more secure in their own neighborhood.

She has been an incredible supporter of transportation, extending the highway trust fund, helping protect over 1 million jobs. Or her Mat Map-21 Transportation Bill, which modernized Federal highway, highway safety, and transportation programs.

And she has fought for children and families, her work in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act—providing extra services for young adults under 21 and helping some of America's young people who need it most.

On a personal note, I have greatly enjoyed sharing a love of music with my friend, BARBARA. Her creativity and passion for song has been a special part of who she is.

Her retirement, while well earned, will be a loss for all of us.

Thank you so much for your service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I wish to offer a few brief comments, if I might, so I may thank and congratulate Senator MIKULSKI for her tireless contributions to the State of Maryland and the whole country.

As many know, she is a passionate, capable, effective champion for people of all backgrounds, and she got her start in local government. One of the things we have in common is that I, too, started in a very humble office as a county council member in my home community of New Castle County, DE.

The way I first met BARBARA MIKULSKI and first saw her toughness, grit, passion, and determination was in a fight over a program she helped give life to, the national service program known as AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is a fantastic national program that partners with the Federal Government, State, and local governments, the private sector, and nonprofit volunteers. She has been a tireless champion for AmeriCorps over many years and has made a lasting difference in its areas of focus and work.

During my short 6 years here, she has been a great friend and a mentor to me and to so many others on both sides of the aisle. JOE BIDEN, our Vice President, has often said: Show me your budget, and I will show you your values. As leader of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI helped to lift up our values and helped to make sure we invested in effective programs that made sure we fed the hungry, housed the homeless, fought for manufacturing, and ensured that Federal workers who lived in Maryland and Federal agencies that were rooted, not just in Maryland but around the country, had the resources, support, and capacity to make a lasting difference here in our region and for the entire country.

I just wanted to add my voice to colleagues who stood here on the floor and said: We are so grateful to Senator

BARBARA MIKULSKI for her decades of service to Baltimore, to Maryland, and to our country and for all she has done to lift us up together.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, this Saturday, December 10, marks the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate. I am very proud to be the chairman of that committee—the first chairman who is not a lawyer, I might add—and I will be submitting a resolution, along with some other committee members, to commemorate this 200th anniversary.

Madam President, 200 years ago, the Senate established 11 original standing committees. Today, although there are many committees, the Senate Judiciary Committee is one of four original committees that still meet today. During the past two centuries, some of the most vital and important questions facing the Nation have come before the committee. For example, during the Civil War, the committee ensured that President Lincoln had the emergency powers he needed to pursue the Civil War effort, and in 1864, the committee took a critical step in ending slavery in the United States when it reported the 13th Amendment of the Constitution.

The committee has jurisdiction over issues that directly impact American lives and is on the forefront of deciding important policy issues, including immigration, civil liberties, criminal laws and the protection for victims, and, of course, civil rights. In addition, the committee examines those nominated for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench.

Over the years, the committee has reported legislation that has been vital to the safety and protection of the American people. I don't have time today to discuss all the committee has accomplished over the last 200 years, but I do want to take a minute to recognize this important anniversary. I am very proud of the committee's storied history. Today, I celebrate these accomplishments and will follow that up with the submission of a resolution. I am truly humbled today to be its chairman.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise again to speak about the Dakota Access Pipeline issue in North Dakota. Again, I want to emphasize that we need to focus on the facts and under-

stand what is really going on there. On Saturday, the Obama administration announced its refusal to issue the final easement for the Dakota Access Pipeline to cross a narrow section deep underneath the Missouri River.

This easement is required to finish the 1,172-mile-long pipeline which is already 98 percent complete in North Dakota—98 percent complete in North Dakota—and 86 percent complete overall. As I have indicated before on the floor, it runs from the Bakken oilfields in North Dakota, moving North Dakota light sweet crude all the way to Patoka, IL, so oil can go into all of the refineries along the eastern part of the country and the eastern seaboard.

In fact, our light sweet crude oil competes with OPEC. If they are not using our light sweet crude, they are bringing in oil from places like Saudi Arabia for these eastern refineries. So very important in terms of energy independence for our country, but as I said, this pipeline is 98 percent complete in our State. Now, again, the Obama administration is delaying it.

Unfortunately, this latest Obama administration decision fails to follow the rule of law, it fails to resolve the issue, and it perpetuates an extremely difficult situation for North Dakotans. Furthermore, it is estimated that over 5,000 protesters are still unlawfully gathered on Federal or Corps of Engineers land in our State. They are there in direct violation of the Army Corps' December 5 eviction notice, as well as an evacuation order from North Dakota's Governor.

However, now that the Obama administration has made its decision, protesters should move from their unlawful site on the Army Corp of Engineers' land. Even Standing Rock Chairman David Archambault has finally said that protesters need to leave and return home. Let me repeat that. Even Standing Rock Sioux Chairman David Archambault has finally said protesters need to leave and return home. He is the tribal chairman. The Obama administration needs to do the same. The administration needs to call on the protesters to leave this illegal site as well.

As I said, the Dakota Access Pipeline issue has been difficult for the people of North Dakota. In recent months, protesters have trespassed on private property, they have blocked state highways and damaged bridges, they have committed acts of vandalism to construction equipment by cutting hydraulic hoses, breaking windows, filling gas tanks with gravel, and setting equipment on fire.

Protesters have blocked intersections in Bismarck and Mandan. They have disrupted area businesses, and farmers and ranchers in the area have reported instances of trespassing and butchered livestock. The rule of law matters in this country, but by committing acts of lawlessness at this construction site as a proxy for changing broader environmental policies, the rule of law is undermined.

Just as the pipeline company must follow the law, the protesters themselves need to follow the law as well. By continuing to remain in the camp, the protesters are defying Federal and State orders to leave. They are subjecting residents in the area to additional weeks of disruption and hardship. They also require our law enforcement to continue their around-the-clock presence, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The protesters need to follow the law, just like everyone else. I repeat, it is time—past time—to leave this illegal camp. I would like to address the dedication of our State and local law enforcement officers—the professionals who make up the North Dakota Highway Patrol, our sheriffs, and our deputies around the State and from other States who have come in to assist us.

Members of the North Dakota National Guard and other first responders have acted with professionalism and diligence to maintain peace and order under very difficult circumstances. They continue to protect the public, especially now with the onset of challenging winter conditions. In my 10 years as Governor of North Dakota, I spent a lot of time working with our law enforcement officers to prepare for weather emergencies. I know the preparations these situations require.

Even today, our law enforcement and State Department of Transportation crews are working to keep evacuation routes open, rescuing people stranded on the highways and providing assistance to many from outside North Dakota who are unprepared to deal with the recent blizzard we had in North Dakota.

The men and women in law enforcement are doing their best to protect everyone, including the protesters. We owe our law enforcement a debt of gratitude for their diligence, for their dedication, and for their professionalism, but North Dakota's law enforcement resources are severely strained. I have repeatedly called on the U.S. Department of Justice to provide additional funding and law enforcement officers to ensure public safety.

Our State has requested Federal assistance and was assured—was assured—by the Attorney General that we would be given expedited consideration, but that has not been the case. Our Byrne grant application for Federal assistance has still not been approved by the Attorney General. I will continue to call on the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the Corps to provide additional Federal resources, including funding and law enforcement personnel to assist our State and local law enforcement officers and ensure public safety.

As I have said before, everyone has a right to be heard, but it must be done lawfully and peacefully, whether that is during the permitting process, with its opportunities for public comment,

or through the court system. I emphasize through the court system. That is the established method in our country for dispute resolution. So it is time—it is past time—for the protesters to stand down and to recognize that the courts and the next administration will resolve this issue.

It is also important to recognize that this pipeline is not unique or unusual as an infrastructure project. There are more than 38,000 crude oil pipeline river and water body crossings in the United States—more than 38,000—and more than 1,000 in my State of North Dakota alone. This is one more. These crossings range from rivers, streams, and lakes to ponds, canals, and ditches. Also, it is important to understand the oil is already being transported across a river on rail and across bridges.

Once again, I just want to show—this is the network of oil pipelines in the country. They cross many bodies of water. We are doing it one more time with the latest, greatest technology. The pipeline does not go in the river in any way, shape or form. It is about 100 feet underneath the river. So even if there was a leak, somehow that oil would have to come up through bedrock to even get into the area.

In other words, it is the latest, greatest technology. This oil is already moving to market. It is already crossing the river on rail and on truck. If we don't build this, we are relying on the old infrastructure, which is less safe and less environmentally sound, instead of building the new, latest, greatest infrastructure with the technologies that will be more efficient, more safe, more environmentally sound. That is what makes sense. Again, it is not unique.

Additionally, the pipeline company has modified its route on its own 140 times in North Dakota to avoid any important or cultural resources. So they have modified the route to avoid any cultural resources 140 times just in our State.

In July 2016, the Army Corps issued its final environmental assessment, which concluded with the finding of “no significant environmental impact” and “no historic properties affected.” These determinations have been upheld not once but twice by the Federal courts, including a judge appointed by the Obama administration—a Federal district court judge here in Washington, DC.

As for the way forward for this difficult issue, we need to look at the facts at hand. In the midst of the ongoing news coverage, it can seem that heated rhetoric leaves little room for good-faith efforts to find common ground, but I want to highlight that there continues to be attempts at finding consensus among the stakeholders, even as recently as last Friday.

To that point, in a meeting I had yesterday with the Army Corps' Northwestern Division Commander, BG Scott Spellman, he stated that last Friday, on December 2, the Army

Corps' Omaha district commander, John Henderson, convened representatives from the pipeline company, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Army Corps officials. They met in Bismarck for 5 hours. The meeting included tribal staff and the company's engineering and technical experts who came together for the sole purpose of reviewing Standing Rock's 19 specific safety and environmental concerns raised in the tribe's October 2016 letter to the Corps.

In this meeting, the pipeline company, tribe, and Army Corps discussed all 19 concerns raised by the Standing Rock, and they considered 36 potential terms and conditions that could further reduce the risk of a spill or pipeline rupture. Again, let me repeat that. In order to directly address the river crossing concerns raised by the tribe and the protesters, the pipeline company was willing to consider more than 36 additional safeguards for this crossing.

Friday's meeting actually resulted in a revised proposed easement, which was presented to the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Jo-Ellen Darcy, the next day, on Saturday, December 3—last Saturday. However, the following day, on Sunday, December 4, Assistant Secretary Darcy promptly rejected the revised easement and instead required more “broad public input and analysis.”

Clearly, the Obama administration is not interested in finding a way forward based on the merits of the project, even in light of two Federal court rulings upholding the Army Corps' reviews and even with subsequent attempts by the company to specifically address the tribe's remaining environmental concerns.

In recent days, I have met directly with President-Elect Trump's transition team and conveyed the importance of bringing this situation to a resolution. I have also spoken directly on the matter to Vice President-Elect Mike Pence and to the next Attorney General, JEFF SESSIONS.

President-Elect Trump has now publicly communicated his support for the project, as well as for providing Federal assistance, including additional resources and law enforcement personnel. This project should be decided on the merits and in accordance with the law. Failure to do so will cast new uncertainty on all future infrastructure projects, from pipelines that carry oil and gas and other liquids to transmission lines carrying both traditional and renewable energy.

If companies and individuals cannot rely on a system that follows the rule of law, nobody will risk making future investments in our country's vital infrastructure. That will make our Nation less safe, less secure, and less competitive. As I said a minute ago, think about it. If we can't build new infrastructure, then we will continue to use the old infrastructure, which is less safe and less environmentally secure.

To avoid this situation in the future—the kind of standoff we have with

the Dakota Access Pipeline—we need to focus on ways to improve the permitting process. We need to improve the process so we can make sure all people's voices are heard and provide regulatory certainty to companies willing to invest in large infrastructure projects. This should be done prospectively, not retroactively—looking for ways to better streamline procedures, reduce duplicative hurdles, and improve methods for public input.

This pipeline can be built safely and include necessary protections for both the tribe and everyone else downstream. The fact is that our country needs energy, and we cannot have it without energy infrastructure—pipelines, transmission lines, roads, rail, and bridges—to move both traditional and renewable energy from where it is produced to where it is consumed. Move it both safely and efficiently. Let's all work together to make that happen.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I rise to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

For the people of Hawaii, it started as an ordinary sunny Sunday morning in December. Families were getting ready for church; others were preparing breakfast. It was quiet. It was peaceful.

Just before 8 a.m., the first wave of Japanese warplanes started their coordinated surprise attack on the island of Oahu. Bombers attacked aircraft clustered wing tip to wing tip at Wheeler and Hickam Airfields, making it too easy for Japanese pilots to destroy their targets. By the end of the attack, Japanese forces sunk four of the eight battleships at Ford Island. Another battleship intentionally ran aground in the harbor to avoid blocking the channel. Three destroyers and seven other ships were sunk or severely damaged. It was the worst disaster in U.S. naval history. There were 2,403 servicemembers killed or mortally wounded, and 1,247 servicemembers were injured. Fifty-seven civilians were killed.

Across Oahu, people watched as smoke and fire blackened the sky over Pearl Harbor. Among those were two 17-year-olds, Daniel K. Inouye and Daniel K. Akaka. Like many others that day, they were called to duty. Senator Daniel Akaka, then an ROTC student at the Kamehameha School for Boys, grabbed a rifle and guarded the hills above the school from potential Japanese paratroopers. Senator Inouye, then a volunteer medical aid, reported to Lunalilo Elementary School, where for a week he tended to the wounded.

In the weeks that followed, the shipyard was back to work repairing vessels raised from the harbor. Incredibly, all but two ships returned to service in just 2 years. The *Nevada* went on to

support the invasion of Normandy. Five other ships damaged at Pearl Harbor later met Japanese forces in the Philippines. That “Day of Infamy” and the events that followed would ultimately galvanize more than 12 million Americans to serve in uniform during the Second World War. We remember the men and women who left their homes to fight an enemy they did not know in places they had never heard of. They said goodbye to their families to protect their neighbors—foreclosed the promise of their own dreams to protect our freedom. We know well the stories of courage and devotion: the Tuskegee Airmen, the 442nd Infantry Regiment. We remember the ingenuity and heroism of Doolittle’s Raiders, the Navajo code-talkers, and Nisei translators.

The war in the Pacific lasted 2,194 days. When American occupation forces landed 4 years later at the end of the war, Japan was in ruins. But instead of turning our backs on the people of Japan, we extended a hand. We chose to turn an enemy into an ally. American occupiers immediately set out to transform Japan into a peaceful democracy, implementing land and economic reforms, improving working conditions, and granting women the right to vote. The United States sent billions of dollars in economic aid to rebuild Japan. Most of that assistance was delivered as food, for even several years after the surrender, there was widespread starvation in Japan. It is hard to forget someone who sends you milk for hungry children, as Prime Minister Abe recently told Congress.

The attack on Pearl Harbor set in motion a chain of events with painful consequences for our two countries, but the decision we made to partner with, rather than punish, Japan helped to forge between our two countries what Senator Mike Mansfield described as “the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none.”

Today, Japan is a leader in the Western world. We cooperate as partners to maintain regional peace. Our countries work together to stop the flow of extremism and arms in the Indian Ocean. We work side by side in humanitarian relief missions and to defend against ballistic missile threats. Our relationship has never been stronger. President Obama’s trip in May to Hiroshima and President Abe’s trip to Pearl Harbor demonstrate the endurance of this friendship and the importance of reconciliation.

So as we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, we remember the service and sacrifice of the men and women who lost their lives on that day in December. In remembering them and the service of those who fought, we know that their sacrifices were not in vain. America and Japan are forever joined in history. We move forward together, in the memory of those who sacrificed for a better world and for peace.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I rise to compliment and congratulate my good friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, on her decision to retire from the U.S. Senate. We are going to miss her very much. She has been a very effective Senator in speaking not only as a representative for the State of Maryland but also for the entire country on so many different issues and Federal responsibilities of our government. She has been very successful in every way—serving as chair of the committee on Appropriations, where it has been my pleasure to work closely with her as the vice chair when the Republicans were in the minority, and then coming to chair the committee, with her as the ranking Democratic member during other periods.

It has been a distinct honor to serve with her on the Appropriations Committee. In 2012, she became the first woman to chair the committee. She has also served as vice chairwoman for the past 2 years. I am pleased that we have been able to work together to report bills that reflect our shared commitment to national security, scientific research, education, and economic development. Senator MIKULSKI has been a very valuable partner throughout. Her approach to funding decisions as chairwoman and vice-chairwoman highlights the importance of the constitutional role of Congress to be good stewards of taxpayer money.

I congratulate BARBARA MIKULSKI on her distinguished career representing the people of Maryland which reflects great credit on our U.S. Senate. Best wishes to her.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise to discuss the National Defense Authorization Act. After several months of debate and negotiation, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees have arrived at a completed conference agreement. This will be the 55th consecutive time that we pass a National Defense Authorization Act, which sets national security policy and provides important authorities to the Department of Defense.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman MCCAIN for his leadership during the course of this year. At his direction, the Senate Armed Services Committee undertook a robust review of how the Department develops strategic guidance and executes their business processes to help the Department operate more effectively and efficiently. I commend the chairman for making this effort a priority for the committee, and I appreciate his willingness to work in a bipartisan fashion on this important endeavor.

The conference report we are considering today includes many Senate reforms, including efforts to improve the defense strategy documents produced

by the Department and reorganizing the Office of Acquisition, Technology and Logistics to ensure that the Pentagon emphasizes research and innovation in support of our warfighters.

In particular, one of the most important reform efforts included in the final conference agreement is a Senate provision that would create cross-functional teams. This is a new tool for the Secretary of Defense to manage the formation and implementation of policies and solutions for complex problems that inherently cut across the many stovepiped functional organizations in the Department of Defense. The private sector has pioneered and mastered this highly effective integration mechanism for a generation, and business schools and business consultancies have championed its use for decades. I consider this provision to be one of the most important reform initiatives in this bill. None of this would have happened without the leadership, guidance, and constant urging of the chairman, Senator MCCAIN. Once again, I commend him for his extraordinary efforts.

As these reforms are introduced, it is imperative that we continue to collaborate with the Department of Defense to ensure that these reforms contribute to our national security and do not create unnecessary and detrimental consequences. This will be a partnership going forward to ensure that these reforms are adequate, appropriate, and work for the benefit of the men and women in uniform, and that is a process in which we will all be engaged.

With respect to the budget, the conference agreement we are considering today authorizes a total of \$619 billion, which includes \$543.4 billion in base budget funding for the Department of Defense and certain security activities of the Department of Energy and \$67.8 billion in overseas contingency operations, or OCO, funding.

This OCO amount includes \$5.8 billion in supplemental funding requested by President Obama for operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, as well as an additional \$3.2 billion above President Obama’s budget request for base budget requirements primarily devoted to increased end strength. I have serious concerns about increasing OCO funding above the President’s budget request without a corresponding increase in domestic spending. While the OCO account is exempt from budget caps, the purpose of the Budget Control Act was to establish proportionately equal caps on defense and nondefense discretionary spending to force a bipartisan compromise on the budget.

During consideration of the NDAA, the House and Senate had different approaches on how best to fund these base budget requirements and ongoing military operations. However, after a robust debate, we reached an agreement on a modest increase in OCO to fund increased end strength and to replenish depleted munitions inventories.

With respect to Afghanistan, the conference agreement supports our military operations. Specifically, the bill authorizes approximately 8,400 troops in Afghanistan in 2017, including fully funding the Afghan Security Forces Fund at \$4.26 billion to continue support to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. Likewise, the bill contains \$814 million to enhance the capabilities of the Afghan Air Force and begin a transition from Mi-17 to the UH-60 helicopters.

Also—and this is an issue that I support very strongly after a recent trip to Afghanistan—it accelerates the Afghan Aviation Initiative, which is designed to build greater rotary wing capability and fixed-wing capabilities in the Afghan Air Force. This is a critical battlefield advantage that the Afghan forces will have over the Taliban.

With respect to Europe, we have fully funded the President's request of \$3.4 billion for the European Reassurance Initiative. This funding will support critical investments that will increase rotational U.S. military presence in Europe, improve key infrastructure, and enhance allied and partner military capabilities to respond to external aggression and preserve regional stability. The agreement also includes an authorization of \$350 million for the Ukraine training assistance initiative, to continue and expand security assistance and intelligence support to the Ukrainian security forces to protect their sovereignty and encourage a continued focus on robust defense reform efforts.

With regard to our special operations forces, they are at the forefront of our fight against ISIL, Al Qaeda, and other terrorist groups. The bill also includes important reforms designed to improve the oversight and advocacy for their important efforts by enhancing the role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. I think those reforms will be something we watch and encourage.

With respect to other aspects of our security programs, the conference agreement includes a comprehensive reform of Defense Department security cooperation programs. This is the first time such a reform has been undertaken, and it is an effort to ensure there is unity of effort across our government in the security assistance arena.

Likewise, the conference agreement includes a provision that would enhance the scope and authority of the Global Engagement Center. For too long we have been losing the information space to our adversaries—both state and nonstate actors. It is my hope that by providing this critical center at the State Department with a powerful mandate, we can begin to improve our efforts in the information space.

The bill also supports modernization efforts of many different weapons platforms. I am particularly pleased to see

that we are continuing two-per-year construction of the Virginia-class submarine. It also supports additional requests for advance procurement to keep this production on track. Furthermore, it authorizes \$1.9 billion for the Ohio-class replacement, including the first strategic nuclear submarine procurement funds, to begin the process of reinvigorating and rebuilding our underwater nuclear deterrence through the Ohio-class replacement.

In addition to modernization of our underwater forces, we are also looking at modernizing our triad of air, sea, and ground delivery platforms for strategic deterrence. This is the beginning of a multi-decade effort involving three major acquisition programs: our ballistic missile submarines—as I have mentioned, the Ohio-class replacement—long-range penetrating bombers, and also the land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles. Most importantly, we will be modernizing their command and control systems to ensure that our President always has positive control of these forces. As I have stated many times, modernization is critical in light of the increasingly belligerent actions by Russia, which conducted a nuclear exercise immediately after invading Crimea as a form of nuclear intimidation.

In the area of technology and acquisition, I am pleased the conference report takes a number of important steps to help DOD maintain its technological superiority. We continue to build on past work on acquisition reform undertaken by the committee, as well as the successes of Defense Secretary Carter and his colleagues, including Under Secretary Kendall, in controlling the costs of major weapons systems procurement programs.

The agreement includes a number of steps to improve defense acquisition processes, including strengthening the acquisition workforce, simplifying and streamlining regulatory and bureaucratic burdens on the government and industry, making it easier for DOD to work with innovative small businesses and commercial companies, and promoting the use of prototyping and rapid fielding to speed the development and deployment of advanced new systems.

In the area of technological innovation, I hope that reconstituting the position of Under Secretary of Research and Engineering will help promote connections with innovators both inside and outside of the government and ensure that the policies and practices governing our R&D programs, our defense labs, and our engagements with universities and industry are optimized to promote the most efficient and effective development of new systems and technologies.

Finally, I think the conference report includes important provisions designed to streamline and modernize Pentagon management processes. The bill supports efforts to develop and execute the modern management techniques and

practices modeled on private sector best practices, including the use of big data to improve Pentagon business processes. I believe that refining Pentagon management practices will result in cost savings and efficiencies, freeing up funds for other critical needs.

I note that the conferees did not include several provisions regarding the application of Obama administration Executive orders related to labor, safe workplace, and LGBT issues. Many of these are very problematic. I hope we continue to work to ensure the Department engages with fiscally and socially responsible and effective contractors to the best benefit of warfighters and taxpayers alike.

Of course, one of the key issues for the committee was the readiness of troops. I am pleased the conference report includes significant resources for the military services' unfunded requirements, with the goal of restoring full-spectrum readiness as soon as possible. For example, the bill includes additional funding for Army units to conduct additional home station training in order to prepare them for future combat training center rotations, as well as additional flight training for the other services.

We have also included significant resources in order to provide additional depot maintenance to repair our military aircraft, ships, and combat vehicles. There is also additional funding to better sustain our military installations, specifically in the facilities restoration and modernization accounts.

In the area of military personnel, the conference agreement accomplishes much on behalf of our servicemembers and the Department of Defense because we owe them much. It authorizes a 2.1 percent pay raise for all servicemembers, supports requested increases in the housing benefit, and reauthorizes a number of expiring bonus and special pay authorities to encourage enlistment, reenlistment, and continued service by Active-Duty and Reserve component military personnel.

Unfortunately, the bill does not include the provision in the Senate-passed bill that would have required women to register for the draft to the same extent men are required. I continue to believe this is the right policy for the Nation and the military. If we are going to have a draft, women must share equally the burden and privilege of service. We must be able to take advantage of their extraordinary talents because without those talents our military today could not function as it does.

However, the bill does establish an independent national commission on military, national, and public service to study the need for a military selective service process, including whether the Nation continues to need a mechanism designed to draft large numbers of replacement combat troops; whether women should be required to participate equally in the process; the means

by which to foster a greater attitude and ethos of service among the United States' young men and women, including an increased propensity for military service; and how to obtain military, national, and public service individuals with skills for which the Nation has a critical need. This commission could provide valuable insight on how we should proceed, particularly in a state of national emergency, in pulling together the best of our young people to serve the Nation.

With respect to health care, the bill contains a robust package of health care reforms that will bring the military health care program in line with the best practices in the civilian health care industry. This is something we have to continue to emphasize—the ability to care and treat all of our personnel and retirees with respect to their health care.

I think we have done a lot of important work in this legislation.

Let me conclude, as I began, by thanking Chairman MCCAIN and my Senate colleagues on the committee for their thoughtful contributions to this process. I also thank my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee, Chairman MAC THORBERRY and Ranking Member ADAM SMITH. They did a superb job, along with their staffs. This was truly a thoughtful, bipartisan process that resulted in a bill that I believe will receive overwhelming support on the floor of the Senate, as it did in the House.

Finally, of course, this agreement would not have been possible without the extraordinary work of the staff. I thank so many, but I particularly thank Chris Brose, Steve Barney, and all the majority committee staff for their hard work.

On the Democratic side, I thank my staff director, Elizabeth King. I also thank Gary Leeling, Creighton Greene, Carolyn Chuhta, Maggie McNamara, Jonathan Clark, Jonathan Epstein, Ozge Guzelsu, Jody Bennett, Mike Kuiken, Kirk McConnell, Mike Noblet, John Quirk, Arun Seraphin, and Jon Green.

I deeply appreciate all of their efforts. They have made this bill possible.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor to thank Chairman MCCAIN for his efforts on the

National Defense Authorization Act. Yesterday I was here talking about the Cures Act, and I know that is the business of the day, but I also want to recognize the importance of the NDAA and its assumed or hoped-for passage today or this week. I appreciate Senator MCCAIN working with me and supporting my amendment to remove language that would allow the administration to expend taxpayer dollars on plans to close Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

As in previous years, the NDAA continues to prohibit the closure of Gitmo and the transfer of detainees to U.S. soil. Fort Leavenworth, in my home State of Kansas, has been a site under this administration's consideration. This administration and foreign countries have lost track of numerous detainees, which escalates the risk for military men and women if the detainee is returned to the battlefield. With the total reengagement rate at Gitmo detainees returning to that battlefield at more than 30 percent, this provision is a life-and-death matter.

This Defense authorization also halts troop reduction and increases end strength across our Active, National Guard, and Reserve Forces. In every Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee hearing this past year with Department of Defense officials, from service chiefs to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, I received answers that concluded our Armed Services would welcome more forces, not less.

I introduced the POSTURE Act, S. 2563, with my colleagues Senator BLUNT and Senator PERDUE, to reverse these force reductions, increase end strength in the Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve, and specifically increase levels for our ground forces in the Army and Marine Corps. I am pleased this defense legislation—the one we are considering this week—reflects the objectives of the POSTURE Act by stopping force reductions and increasing end-strength levels across the Armed Services.

There are many unknowns around the world, and to reduce the size of our defense force would be a mistake. We have been impacted already by budget decisions rather than based upon what our Armed Forces need to defend America. Readiness is paramount, and this NDAA allows for increased funding to make certain we are training, equipping, and readying our forces as challenges around the world unfold. As Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Mark Milley has repeatedly said, "Readiness wins wars."

The Big Red One—the Army's 1st Infantry Division located at Fort Riley in Manhattan, KS, near Junction City, KS, has deployed its headquarters to Iraq for a second time in less than 2 years. That kind of turnaround requires the highest levels of readiness.

This bill also authorizes critical military construction funding for Fort Riley, Fort Leavenworth, and McConnell Air Force Base, helping Kansas re-

main a stronghold for our military training and power.

As we head into the holidays, I am pleased that servicemembers and their families will receive, with the certainty of the passage of this bill, benefits which they have earned and that they deserve, which includes a 2.1-percent pay increase, which is the largest increase in 5 years.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR

As we pass this defense legislation to support our military men and women, those who serve our Nation, we must take a moment to also reflect upon the significance of this day—December 7, 1941—that horrific attack on Pearl Harbor 75 years ago. That day forever changed our Nation and our national defense. We should never forget those who perished in that attack, as they made that ultimate sacrifice: 2,008 naval men, 109 Marines, 218 Army men, and 68 civilians.

Shortly after I was elected to the U.S. Senate on December 7, 2010, I had the distinct opportunity to present service medals to Kansans who had served and survived the attack on Pearl Harbor. It took us 69 years after they survived that attack, but I was honored to bestow U.S. Navy veterans Arthur Dunn and Paul Aschbrenner with their much deserved commendations. It was a special moment I will not forget.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE AND BENEFITS LEGISLATION

To honor those who perished that day as well as those who survived, like Arthur and Paul, we must care for the 21.8 million veterans who live among us today and who deserve the best our Nation can offer. We have an opportunity to better care for our veterans with the passage of H.R. 6416, the Jeff Miller and Richard Blumenthal Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2016, which has passed the House and is coming to the Senate.

This legislation includes 76 bipartisan provisions to improve VA health care, streamline disability compensation, and address other benefits and services that must be reformed to better serve our veterans. I thank the chairman of my committee, the Senator from Georgia, for his leadership in this regard.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation includes legislation that I, along with Senator BLUMENTHAL, have diligently worked on for over the last several years. It is sponsored by 48 of our Senate colleagues. It is the Toxic Exposure Research Act. This legislation takes a significant step toward researching the potential health effects of toxic exposure to veterans and their descendants. To send a strong message to our veterans, we must pass this legislation.

I often meet with World War II veterans at the memorial that was built in their honor on the National Mall. The message I try to convey is one that I also shared with my dad upon my first

visit to the memorial. I stepped away and called my dad at home in Plainville, KS, and I said: Dad, I should have said this a long time ago, but I thank you for your service, I respect you, and I love you. That, we do again today. On this significant day in our Nation's history, with the passage of veterans legislation, with the passage of NDAA, we certainly can tell our service men and women and our veterans, those who served our country so diligently and so faithfully, that we thank you for your service, we respect you, and we love you.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to talk about the ongoing discussions about the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. I basically want to make the case that this repeal, without a replacement being known, would be malpractice for the health care of millions of Americans as well as malpractice for the American economy. Before I talk about why, I just want to tell two stories.

On Monday of this week, I visited Neighborhood Health, which is a community health center in Northern Virginia that serves 14,000 patients. It is not a walk-in clinic; they are sort of a medical home for 14,000 low-income Northern Virginians, mostly working people. Community health centers in Virginia, West Virginia, and in every State are a critical part of the health care safety net. In Virginia, they serve about 300,000 patients and millions nationally.

They are medicine with a mission. They don't deny anybody primary health care services because of inability to pay, and residents have equal access regardless of where they live, their culture, their gender, their race, or resources.

Many centers, including the one I visited just 20 minutes from here, were centers that were able to build or expand because of the Affordable Care Act. Facilities have gotten better in communities across the country because of the Affordable Care Act. That visit made powerfully clear to me how much every ZIP Code in this country has been affected by the Affordable Care Act because of these centers and other services that are provided.

The second story is a story from my recently completed, 105-day, unsuccessful venture as part of a national ticket. I was at the Iowa State Fair. A grandfather was carrying a little boy who looked to be about 3½ years old. I said: Tell me this youngster's name. The grandfather said: This is Jude. Of course, I said: Hey, Jude, and I said: Tell me about Jude. The grandfather and now the father walked over and started to talk to me, and what they said is this: Jude is 3½ years old and he has already had five open heart operations at the Omaha Children's Hospital, which is just across the river from Western Iowa, in Nebraska. They

looked at me and they said he couldn't have had these operations had it not been for the Affordable Care Act. Had it not been for the Affordable Care Act, he now would have exceeded his lifetime limit of any policy he could ever get, and he also would have a pre-existing condition because of his heart condition that would render him unable to get insurance for the rest of his life. They looked at me, and—the father especially is a pretty big guy—and they asked: Will you do all you can—will you do all you can to make sure that this act is not repealed? You can strengthen it, you can improve it, but will you do all you can to make sure it is not repealed? I looked at them and I said—because I believed this even before they asked me the question: I will do anything to my last breath to make sure that we improve this but that we don't get rid of it. That is why I stand on the floor today.

Since the Affordable Care Act was passed in March of 2010, 20 million Americans have health insurance and many of them for the first time in their life. That is, I think, the combined population of about 14 or 15 States, having health insurance for the first time in their lives.

Now, when you have health insurance, it is not only that you can get care for an illness or an accident, even when you are healthy, you can go to bed at night with the knowledge that if something happens to my wife tomorrow, if something happens to me tomorrow, if something happens to my child tomorrow, they will be able to receive care.

The percentage in the Nation of people who were uninsured when the Affordable Care Act was passed was 16 percent. One in six Americans was uninsured. Now it is down to 8.6 percent. That is the lowest level of uninsured we have had probably since we have measured it. In Virginia, the drop has been from 13 percent—we were a little better than the national average—and we have dropped down to 9.1 percent uninsured. We are a little higher than the national average now because my State does not accept Medicaid expansion, but the difference in 6 years is 327,000 more Virginians have health insurance in 2015 than had it in 2010. That is a powerful thing.

In addition to having health insurance, families are protected because they can't get turned away because of preexisting conditions, they can't get turned away because they have reached lifetime limits in terms of their medical care, as Jude would have reached by age 3½. Children can stay on family policies until age 26. Women cannot be charged different health care premiums than men. Insurance companies are required to rebate excess premium payments back to consumers if they overcharge.

It is not just about the millions who have health insurance who have never had it before, there are also millions and millions more to receive protec-

tions they have never had before. These are important provisions.

There has been discussion that I have been reading and following that what some want to do is just repeal the Affordable Care Act, with a vague promise that something will happen down the line. Of course, those who want to repeal the Affordable Care Act who voted against it in March of 2010 have had 6 or now nearly 7 years to come up with what they think would be better, and there has been no consensus about what they think would be better. So the notion of we are going to repeal it and don't worry, we will come up with a better alternative, rings pretty hollow to a family like Jude's parents and grandparents who have a three-and-a-half-year-old-boy who needs open heart surgery. The notion that don't worry, we will find a replacement, we will find a fix—I think we could forgive somebody like Jude's family for not having a lot of confidence in that.

If, in fact, we are serious about finding a fix, why don't we go to work finding a fix before we pass legislation to repeal the law.

I have said I think it is health malpractice and economic malpractice. Let me start with the economic malpractice. The worst thing Congress can do for the economy is to inject uncertainty into it. I have been a mayor and I have been a Governor and I am a certainty fanatic. What I have learned about the economy is that our strong and resilient business sector—if you give them certainty, they can plan. They may not like a policy, they might not like a budget number, but if you tell them this is the way it is going to be, the ingenuity of our private sector is significant. They are going to be able to plan, they are going to be able to make the best of it, they are going to be able to figure it out, but if you provide uncertainty and don't tell people what you are going to do, that is very devastating.

I am on the Budget Committee. I came into the Budget Committee in the Senate, and I told my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: I am a certainty fanatic. We should be doing a budget. We shouldn't be doing a continuing resolution right now. We should be doing appropriations bills because when we tell both our own planners in our own departments and also the private economy: This is what it is going to be for the next year, they can figure it out, they can adjust, and they can do well. When we instead deliver a message that we don't know what we are going to do—oh, there will be a fix, but it will be a few years from now, we can't tell you what it is going to be now, and really we can't even promise we will do it since we haven't done it in 6 years—you inject uncertainty into the economy, and that is the worst thing we can do.

I have made the argument that the recovery we have been on economically—which is not a robust recovery, but it is a steady recovery—the principal reason it has been steady but not

robust is because of uncertainty, and the principal generator of uncertainty in the United States is this body, Congress. Congress's inability to do budget in regular order, Congress's inability to tackle priorities, Congress's inability to work on big picture fiscal issues generates uncertainty.

So now we are talking about a repeal of the Affordable Care Act, the single largest sector in the American economy. One-sixth of the GDP of this country is health care. If you tell the entire American economy we are going to go into the largest sector in the economy, we are going to repeal it, and don't worry, we will get to something down the road as a replacement, you will inject uncertainty into an economy in a degree that has never been done by this body that I think will have catastrophic economic consequences even beyond health care.

It is also malpractice in the health lives of Americans. The Urban Institute has come out with a study today, an update of a study they did a year ago. There was a proposal a year ago to repeal the Affordable Care Act that President Obama vetoed. They did a study about what would repeal mean. This is what repeal means to the American public as we get ready to celebrate the holidays, a time when we are mindful of the needs of others:

The number of uninsured people in the United States, if the ACA is repealed, would rise from its current 28.9 million to 58.7 million, an increase of 29.8 million uninsured in this country. The share of nonelderly people without insurance would increase from 11 percent to 21 percent.

Of the 29.8 million newly uninsured as a result of the repeal, 22.5 will become uninsured as a result of eliminating premium tax credits, Medicaid expansion, and the individual mandate, and the additional 7.3 million would become uninsured because of the near collapse of the nongroup insurance market, and 82 percent of the new 29 million who will become uninsured are working families, 82 percent; 38 percent would be ages 18 to 34; 56 percent would be non-Hispanic Whites; 80 percent of adults becoming uninsured are adults who do not have college degrees. There will be 12.9 million fewer people with Medicaid or CHIP coverage in 2019 if the Affordable Care Act is repealed, and nearly 9.5 million people who have received tax credits to help them purchase private nongroup health coverage in 2019 will no longer receive that assistance. This is catastrophic to tens of millions of Americans.

I will tell a third story that is a story about me. I have to have the healthiest family in the United States, my wife and I and our three children. The only hospitalizations we have ever had, until my wife recently broke a bone, was for three child births. Our kids are 27, 24, and 21. We are the healthiest family in the United States. I was required once to go out right after the Affordable Care Act passed to buy

health insurance on the open market. I didn't have an employer who could cover it. Two insurers turned me down because they said: We can't write a policy for your whole family because of a preexisting condition. One insurer turned me down because of something about me, and one insurer turned me down because of something about one of my children. Again, we are the healthiest family there is.

We were able to say: Wait a minute. The Affordable Care Act just passed. You are not legally allowed to do that now. You have to write a policy for the whole family.

The insurance agent who dealt with us on the phone said: Let me talk to my supervisor, and then called back and said: You know, what. You are right. We have to write you a policy.

This is a law that not only provides health insurance to 20 million people who never had it before but for even healthy families like mine provides benefits to protect against some of the worst and most predacious behaviors of insurance companies. If the act is repealed, this all goes away.

Americans agree, repeal is not the answer. A Kaiser Foundation poll that was done in the last 2 weeks showed that only 26 percent of Americans support a repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Of the other 75 percent, some think it should stay the same, some think it should be tweaked backward a little bit, some think it should be advanced, but only one in four Americans believe we should repeal this law. Overwhelmingly, what the American public is telling us is, we should improve the law. That is what we should be about in this body.

When I was the Governor of Virginia, I noticed at the end of every legislative session there would be 1,100 bills on my desk for me to review, sign, veto, or amend. Of the 1,100 bills, pretty much every year 200 or 300 would be new, but 800 would be improvements to existing law. The job of a legislature is more about taking existing laws and reforming and improving it than repealing or doing something brand new. That is what puzzles me. Why aren't we doing that? Clearly, there is no rush. There is no rush because the discussions are, we would repeal the Affordable Care Act with a promise we will find a replacement in 2 or 3 years. So if the notion is we are going to work for 2 or 3 years to find a replacement, there is no rush, and if there is no rush, why aren't we sitting down right now? Instead of repealing the law, why aren't we sitting down right now? Let's sit down around the table, let's talk about what we don't like, let's talk about what we do like, let's talk about what it means to have 20 million people in this country with health insurance, many for the first time in their lives, and what they might think. Let's get the perspectives of hospitals. Let's get the perspectives of insurers, of doctors, and other medical professionals. That is what we should be doing. What is the rush?

I fear the rush is for one reason: a desire to do something before this President leaves office that can be a little bit of a poke in his eye, but it is a poke in his eye politically in a way that takes families like Jude's family or the families I saw at the neighborhood health center in Alexandria and puts deep fear and uncertainty in their lives and also puts uncertainty into one-sixth of the American economy.

I know we will be having this discussion in earnest, I suspect a little bit over the next couple of days but more when the year begins, just as we are going to be having discussions about Medicare and Medicaid, with 1.3 million Medicare enrollees in Virginia as of 2015. The CHIP and Medicaid Programs in Virginia have an additional 970,000 enrollees. I read dramatic discussions about these programs as well, these basic safety net programs.

I will conclude and say there is no reason we shouldn't be able to sit down around the table and talk about improvements. What I might call a reform somebody else could call a replacement. I don't care about the label, but what I do care about is repealing a law that provides millions of people the confidence that they have health care for the first time in their lives, doing it and having the discussion during the holiday season, doing it in a way that will hurt working people, will hurt working people who don't have high school degrees, doing it in a way that will hurt people who are already sick, who are already dealing with illnesses in their families.

I am a student of this body. I am not a historian. I am a student of this body, but my prediction would be this: If this body goes down the path of repealing this important law that provides important protections to millions with no idea about what the replacement is, I think it will be a day we will look back on and those who care about this body will look back on, probably in the not-too-distant future, and will say this will be one of the low moments in the history of the United States Senate. There is no need for it because there are people of good will in this body who are willing to sit down and find solutions and find improvements and find reforms, but nobody seems willing to have that discussion. Let's have that discussion rather than the repeal discussion, and we will serve our constituents better.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote on significant legislation—a bill that aims to make it easier for innovative medical treatments to be approved, while investing over \$6 billion in medical research and combating the opioid crisis. The bill also takes an important step toward improving our mental health system, specifically by strengthening our parity laws to ensure mental health treatments are covered by insurance companies.

Medical research holds tremendous promise, but our commitment to this

funding has not kept pace with what is needed to make more breakthroughs with diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's. In recent years, Congress has supported increased funds for medical research, but these increases have come at the expense of other important domestic programs. We can and should do more.

In October, Vice President BIDEN joined me in Vermont to discuss the future of cancer treatment. We learned that we are on the cusp of so many developments in fighting the disease, but that more research is needed to get there. This bill contains \$1.8 billion dedicated to Vice President BIDEN's cancer moonshot and another \$1.4 billion in precision medicine to help target treatments to individual patients. It also includes \$1.5 billion for President Obama's BRAIN Initiative, to expand brain mapping technologies that help scientists understand brain disorders and diseases affecting the central nervous system. Since the BRAIN Initiative was established in 2013, it has already made significant advances in medical knowledge, including improving artificial limb technologies and discovering more links between brain chemical functions and depression.

I am also pleased that this bill finally fulfills our commitment to fund efforts to combat the opioid crisis. This is especially critical since Congress failed to include necessary funding resources when the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act passed earlier this year. This bill contains \$1 billion to combat the opioid crisis, with the first half of the funding to be dedicated this fiscal year. Each day, 129 people die from drug overdoses in this country. Vermont and many other predominately rural States have been hit particularly hard by this epidemic. I suspect that almost every Vermonter knows someone who has been impacted by addiction. It is something I hear about regularly when I am home in Vermont. This is not the future we want for our children, for our grandchildren, or for our communities. I am hopeful that the funding included in this bill will help States move people into treatment to eventually stop the tragic cycle of abuse.

While I strongly support this funding, in addition to the bill's expansion of medical research and mental health parity, this bill is far from perfect. Whereas the bill contains \$6.3 billion in upfront cuts to offset funding for its many efforts, these funds are not in fact guaranteed each year. Rather, the Appropriations Committee must act each year to "unlock" the funding. Republican leaders assure us that this funding will go out the door, and as the incoming vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I intend to hold them to that promise.

I am also concerned that the bill includes provisions to fast-track prescription drug approval through the Food and Drug Administration, FDA.

We all want to ensure that patients have access to medications, but we must also be sure those treatments are both safe and effective. I have concerns that this bill may weaken the standards by which the FDA can review certain medications, for example, by allowing the agency to use existing data from different drug trials to prove the safety of new medications that include similar drug compounds.

Furthermore, while the bill makes it easier in many cases to get drugs approved, it does nothing to address the unreasonable price hikes we have seen in some prescription drugs. I filed an amendment with Senators GRASSLEY, KLOBUCHAR, and LEE that would address some of the anticompetitive behavior many drug companies are engaging in to help drive up the cost of their drugs. For example, in order to delay approval of generic drugs entering the market, some drug companies withhold drug samples or refuse to enter into shared safety agreements with generic manufacturers—both of which are necessary for FDA approval. Our amendment, which mirrors our CREATES Act, would close this loophole and help generic drugs come to the market faster.

Unfortunately, the Senate will not have the opportunity to consider this improvement to the bill or any others before we vote on the bill's passage. I am frustrated that a bill of this enormity—that has never been considered by the full Senate—is being placed on the calendar at the end of a session with no opportunity for amendments. I hope the Senate leadership will promptly schedule floor debates on this and other improvements to this package early next year.

Nevertheless, improvements were made to this bill before it was considered by the House last week. For example, the bill no longer includes a provision that would weaken the disclosure requirements for physicians receiving gifts. The bill also now clearly directs opioid funding to States that have been hit hardest by the crisis. Lastly, more of the funding for medical research is set to go out this fiscal year, which will have an immediate impact on improving the important work of the NIH and our overall medical research community.

On balance, this is an important piece of legislation that offers a great promise to move the bar forward on medical research, while also providing critical relief to families suffering from opioid addiction. I believe these strong investments will benefit us for generations to come, and I will support the passage of this bill.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I am pleased to support the 21st Century Cures Act, which includes a number of critical mental health provisions, much needed funding for medical research and innovation at the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration, as well as funding to help combat the opioid crisis in our country.

First, I would like to highlight division B of this legislation, the Mental Health Reform Act. The Mental Health Reform Act represents years of work in Congress across party lines to improve the quality of and access to mental health and substance abuse treatment, such as training more behavioral health workers and strengthening parity for mental health and substance abuse treatment. This bill also includes my legislation, the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Reauthorization Act, which supports youth suicide prevention grants for schools—elementary schools through college where children and young adults spend most of their time—to be able to reach at-risk youth. I am especially pleased that, for the first time, this bill will allow funding to be used for mental health treatment on college campuses, the most effective way to prevent suicide. I have worked with advocates across the mental health community for the better part of the last decade on this effort, so I am pleased to see this come to fruition.

This legislation also includes an infusion of funding for National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration—\$4.8 billion over the next 10 years, including \$1 billion to be concentrated over the next 3 years for the Cancer Moonshot initiative. I commend Vice President BIDEN for his work to spearhead the Cancer Moonshot initiative over the last year, and I think it was a fitting tribute that the Senate agreed unanimously to rename this title of the bill after his son, Beau Biden, who tragically lost his life to cancer last year. The remaining funding will be used to support key efforts at the NIH, such as the Precision Medicine Initiative, the BRAIN Initiative, and regenerative medicine using adult stem cells. In addition, the bill contains \$1 billion in funding for States to respond to the ongoing opioid epidemic. Earlier this year, passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act was an important first step in addressing this crisis, but my colleagues on the other side of the aisle voted against efforts to fund the legislation and provide access to treatment in our communities. I am pleased that we will finally have real funding going to communities this year to provide this treatment.

However, I am disappointed that this bill does not make this funding mandatory. We will still have to rely on appropriations in the future to ensure that this funding goes out as intended. I am also concerned about the cuts in this bill, which many of my colleagues have spoken about at length during consideration of the bill, and I would like to echo those comments. For example, this legislation cuts the Prevention and Public Health Fund by \$3.5 billion, to the detriment of worthy and vital efforts such as youth suicide prevention, immunizations, and lead poisoning prevention.

While I have these reservations, I am pleased that the Congress is able to

support bipartisan reforms to our mental health system, as well as funding for medical research and the opioid response. I hope that we will be able to work on a bipartisan basis to ensure that these efforts continue to be funded over the next several years.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I am pleased to rise to talk about the 21st Century Cures bill we have before us today.

At the beginning of this Congress, my good friend Senator ALEXANDER and I issued a report entitled *Innovation for Healthier Americans* in which we asked a simple, but critical, question: how can we do it better? Chairman ALEXANDER and I asked this question because we must do it better for our constituents and their loved ones who are battling devastating diseases—diseases like Alzheimer's, cancer, and rare pediatric conditions—for which we have no treatments today, but hope that we will in time to help the courageous individuals with these diseases to win their fight. I commend Chairman ALEXANDER for his resolute focus on this critical work and for his leadership in bringing forward the bill we have before us today.

For decades, our Nation has led the world in medical innovation, but the challenges to maintaining this global edge have never been greater. We recognized that our Nation's biomedical discovery and development must work as well as possible to ensure that Americans are able to benefit from the most cutting-edge medical innovations in as timely a manner as possible. We are at a tremendously exciting era in medicine that will be defined by innovation. Innovation holds great potential. Our ability to respond to public health threats, including those that pose a direct threat to our national security, will in large part be defined by whether or not we embrace innovation. In other words, the stakes could not be greater and innovation will be the key to our success in these endeavors.

The bill before us today reflects a tremendous amount of bipartisan work and covers many areas of health care. I want to take just a few moments to highlight a handful of provisions on which I have partnered with my colleagues and that I believe answer the question of how we can do it better.

I am pleased that the final Cures bill includes the Advancing Targeted Therapies for Rare Diseases Act, legislation that will help advance the development of targeted drugs for patients with serious or life threatening rare genetic diseases. Each of us has met constituents facing a difficult diagnosis, and these cases are particularly devastating when the patient is a young child who should have a lifetime ahead of them, but for which we have no treatment to offer them. These are the patients who move us to bring an unapologetic urgency to our work on these issues. The choice between nothing and nothing is not a choice. And so I want to thank my colleagues, par-

ticularly Senator BENNET, Senator HATCH, and Senator WARREN, for their work on the Advancing Targeted Therapies for Rare Diseases Act. Developing drugs for rare diseases is particularly difficult, but as our genetic understanding of rare diseases increases, there will be new opportunities to pursue treatments for Duchenne muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, and certain cancers, and these provisions will help to pave the way for these therapies to reach patients sooner. With these opportunities will come renewed hope for the children, adults, and families battling these conditions.

I am particularly pleased that the final Cures bill also includes the Advancing Breakthrough Devices for Patients Act. This legislation builds on the Advancing Breakthrough Therapies for Patients Act, which was enacted 4 years ago and has been very effective in helping to bring forward breakthrough therapies for patients. I want to thank Senator BENNET and Senator HATCH for their collaboration and partnership on these breakthrough bills. Like our 2012 bill, these provisions will ensure an all-hands-on-deck approach, this time for devices, with the goal of expediting the development and review of breakthrough technologies. These provisions are appropriately focused on what these technologies will mean for patients. In order to qualify for FDA designation as a breakthrough device, a device must provide more effective treatment or diagnosis of life-threatening or irreversibly debilitating diseases or conditions. These devices must represent breakthrough technologies, have no approved alternatives, offer significant advantages over existing approved alternatives, or their availability must be in the best interest of patients. These devices might be the next technology that better prepares us to respond to needs in a disaster or life-threatening situation or the innovation that improves the manner and quality of an individual's episode of care. In other words, bringing forward these breakthrough devices will improve health care.

The timely and predictable review of medical products is key to promoting and protecting the public health. The FDA Modernization Act I authored in 1997 sought to modernize the agency in a way that supported regulating in the least burdensome manner, while ensuring that innovative products would reach patients in as timely a manner as possible. The FDA Device Accountability Act's bipartisan provisions included in the final Cures bill build on these efforts. I want to thank Senator FRANKEN for his collaboration on this legislation, which will ensure that FDA eliminates unnecessary burdens when reviewing devices. It will also permit more efficient device clinical trials. In addition, the bill will require FDA to update guidance on certain tests performed in doctors' offices to ensure that the guidance on this matter aligns with the FDA Modernization Act's in-

tent that, if the results by trained and untrained users are comparable, a test is considered to be accurate for CLIA waiver purposes. If we are going to ensure devices are able to reach Americans in as timely a manner as possible, we need to focus on what is necessary to know to meet FDA's gold standard for approval. What might be nice to know is not necessarily central to what FDA needs to know to make regulatory decisions. These provisions will help provide needed regulatory certainty and focus when it comes to FDA's review of medical devices.

As we worked on the Cures bill this Congress, we have been reminded of the need to be prepared for the full range of public health threats that may present themselves, whether naturally occurring, like the Zika virus, or the result of a deliberate attack. I want to thank Senator CASEY for his partnership in making sure we are as prepared as possible for these threats. The final Cures bill includes provisions from our bipartisan bill, the Medical Countermeasures Innovation Act, which will encourage the development of the medical products needed to protect the American people in the event of a global pandemic or biological weapons attack. Coauthors of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense, Joe Lieberman and Tom Ridge, wrote that this legislation would further strengthen the underpinnings of biological preparedness by creating new incentives for public-private partnerships; clarifying and streamlining contracting processes at the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority; and ensuring that our Nation's health care providers have the guidance they need to use medical countermeasures in an emergency. The Alliance for Biosecurity has said that the medical countermeasure priority review voucher provided for in our legislation, and the final Cures bill, would be a game changer for investment in biodefense. Researching, developing, and getting a medical countermeasure across the approval finish line to market is a long, difficult, costly, and very risky but necessary endeavor. The priority review voucher for medical countermeasures will help to invigorate partnerships to ensure we have the medical countermeasures we need against the most serious identified threats—threats that have been found to affect our national security. We have heard that this program will benefit not only our civilian needs, but those of our Nation's warfighters, and, in doing so, better protect the American people. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to ensure we fully leverage this provision, including ensuring that partners and innovators in this space have the certainty of knowing the Federal Government is committed to seeing this work through and not undercutting it by stopping our work on these fronts before we are fully prepared to protect the American people from these serious threats.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Senator CASEY for working with me in our annual efforts to advocate for the National Institutes of Health having the robust resources it needs to advance its lifesaving work. In addition to the funding increases the NIH has been provided through the appropriations process, this legislation will give NIH a meaningful booster shot in dedicated funding to enhance its work in promising areas.

While passage and enactment of this legislation is a significant step, it is by no means the last. I will continue to hold the NIH and FDA accountable for their work on behalf of America's patients, and I look forward to continuing to partner with my colleagues on these important issues. As I have said before, the day-to-day actions—and, in many cases, inaction—at the FDA has a profound effect on our Nation's patients. It also directly impacts our economy, as FDA-regulated products account for about 25 cents of every dollar spent by American consumers each year. The importance of holding the agency accountable for its actions and inactions—all the way from front-line reviewers to the Commissioner—has never been more important.

The former FDA Commissioner, Dr. Andy von Eschenbach, once wrote that government policy can either inhibit or accelerate the next revolution in science and technology. We must continue to advance and see through policies that spur, foster, and support the innovation and regulatory pathways necessary to realize cutting-edge treatments. Like the FDA Modernization Act in 1997, the bill before us today represents a remarkable opportunity—the opportunity to embrace innovation for healthier Americans. The director of the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill summed it up well when he wrote to me and said that passage of this legislation will not only touch lives, it has the potential to save them. Therefore, it is my strong hope that the tools provided by this legislation will be leveraged and the medical products our constituents are counting on accelerated. This will be good for America's innovators, North Carolinians, and our Nation.

Mr. KAINE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. WICKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, at 2 p.m., the Senate will move to a final passage vote on legislation we call 21st Century Cures. It has been called by the majority leader the most important piece of legislation the Congress is likely to act on this year.

The House of Representatives added to the bill a Mental Health Reform Act—actually three separate bills that Senator MURPHY, Senator CORNYN, and Senator CASSIDY worked on especially here, which is the most important reform of many mental health programs in more than a decade. It is very important to one out of five adult Americans who have a mental illness.

It caused me to think this: This is Pearl Harbor Day. Pearl Harbor Day is a day when we remember the terrifying attacks on the American military that killed more than 2,000 and launched us into World War II. We also remember it as a day that began to create and define what we now refer to as the “greatest generation”—the generation distinguished by the men and women of that era, the era of Bob Dole, George H.W. Bush, and men and women now in their nineties and late eighties. They were defined by being willing to work hard on behalf of the entire country, put their differences aside and work for the greater good; to recognize that our diversity is important, but what is more important is the fact that we are all Americans.

There have been some other times in our recent history when we have been reminded of that, and 9/11 is the most important of those. I remember how I felt after 9/11. I watched President George W. Bush speak, and I thought he spoke eloquently, as did Al Gore at that time, about the principles that unite us a country.

Celebrating our diversity is a good thing. Celebrating our oneness is more important, and it is harder work. What we are doing today is a more modest—much more modest—example of the same sort of spirit. I do not want to suggest that passing a bill in Congress equals going to war or running into a burning building in New York City after it has been attacked, but it is the same spirit. I don't have any apology for suggesting that. It is a spirit of facing up to a big issue, a complex issue that affects lots of people, about which there are lots of legitimate differences, and working hard to resolve those differences so that we are not celebrating those differences, we are celebrating the fact that we came together and—as we did in the House of Representatives last week 392 to 26 and as we did on Monday in the Senate with 85 votes in favor of 21st Century Cures—we moved toward a solution that we all can support.

Sometimes we govern by Executive order in Washington, and Executive orders can be repealed by any new administration. Sometimes we have partisan exercises, as we did with Obamacare 6 years ago, and we have been like the Hatfields and McCoys ever since, shooting each other until we forget what we are arguing about. We actually remember, but it makes it much more difficult than to come together and get a consensus.

Other examples are the civil rights bill of the 1960s, the Medicare bill, and

the bill last December that President Obama called a Christmas miracle when we fixed No Child Left Behind and came forward with a piece of legislation about which there was a consensus not just to fix it but on how to fix it, a consensus supported by Governors as well as teachers unions, classroom teachers as well as school boards. On that bill, there will not be a movement in Congress to repeal it because everybody voted for it. So those who are teaching in our classrooms in our 100,000 public schools and those who are working in State departments of education and the parents will know that for the foreseeable future, there is a consensus and stability about elementary and secondary education.

We hear every day that we have a fractured country, that we have so many differences of opinion, we can't operate. Well, there is one institution in the country that is an institution that is capable of leading the country toward consensus on important issues, and it is the U.S. Senate. Sometimes we are able to do that. We were able to do it last year. As the President said—he called it a Christmas miracle. We fixed No Child Left Behind. We are able to do it today on mental health legislation, which had to navigate its way through gun issues, funding issues, and a whole variety of other issues. We are doing it on 21st Century Cures, which, as I and the majority leader have said, is the most important piece of legislation we will act on.

It is pretty rare that we have legislation that the President of the United States says is an opportunity we just can't miss and the Vice President of the United States is telephoning Senators before they go into their caucus meetings to urge them to support it. At the same time, the Speaker of the House, a Republican, is saying: This is part of my agenda for the future of our country. And the majority leader is saying it is the most important bill we will act on.

It still wasn't easy to pass because we are dealing with a lot of life-and-death issues: How rapidly can we move treatments and cures through the Food and Drug Administration and make sure they are still safe or how slowly can we do it and run up the cost so high that nobody can afford these treatments? How long can we take so that everybody is dead by the time the medicine is ready? We don't want that to happen. Those were the issues we had.

What kind of incentives can we give to drug companies so they can tackle rare diseases in children like the ones at St. Jude whom we see from Mississippi, Tennessee, and across the country? They have rare cancers and other diseases. Nobody is making medicines for those diseases because there is no incentive in the marketplace for it, so we give some incentive in the marketplace for such things.

Electronic medical records have been a real burden to doctors. We spent 30

billion taxpayer dollars, and they were in a ditch. This legislation moves it out of the ditch.

Francis Collins, the distinguished head of the National Institutes of Health, says that in the next 10 years, we will be able hopefully to prevent Alzheimer's or to identify it before symptoms, an artificial pancreas for diabetes, a vaccine for HIV/AIDS, a vaccine for Zika and a universal vaccine for flu, which killed 30,000 last year. According to the Mayo Clinic, regenerative medicine is a game changer—using our own stem cells to restore eyesight or to restore our damaged hearts. There are provisions in this legislation to move that ahead. There is \$4.8 billion in funding for the National Institutes of Health. The bill includes the EUREKA Act, sponsored by the Senator from Mississippi, which is so important. The funding includes money for the President's Precision Medicine Initiative, for the Vice President's Cancer Moonshot, and for the BRAIN Initiative. There is an additional \$500 million for the FDA and \$1 billion for State grants over the next 2 years to fight opioid abuse.

As the President says, this is an opportunity we cannot miss. It is an opportunity we cannot miss and we are not going to miss. We are going to have this bill down to the President very shortly, and he will have an opportunity to be presented with another Christmas miracle.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following my remarks today's editorial from the Wall Street Journal, which says:

Cures is a stride toward a more rational and humane drug development system, and legislation is about compromise. The bill could become a useful precedent for successful progress as the 115th Congress starts to take shape next year.

On Pearl Harbor Day when we celebrate the "greatest generation" and the contributions they made by remembering that while diversity is important, our oneness is more important, this is a much more modest example but a very important one of the same spirit, one that affects virtually every family in America.

I would like to extend my deep thanks and sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff who worked on the bill. We talk about that a lot here, but every one of us who is a Senator knows how crucial that is. We have worked for 2 years on the bill, numerous hearings, numerous discussions. It passed the House of Representatives twice. It came through our committee, the Senate HELP Committee, in the form of 19 different bipartisan bills. Every one of those bills, by the time it passed, 2 was the largest number of recorded votes against each one of those 19 bills.

The staff did a tremendous job on that. I want to especially thank David Cleary, who is my chief of staff, and Evan Schatz, Senator MURRAY's chief on these issues, for the remarkable way they are able to work together with

both Senator MURRAY's staff and my staff.

On Senator MURRAY's staff, John Righter, Nick Bath, Andi Fristedt, Wade Ackerman, Remy Brim, Colin Goldfinch, Madeleine Pannell, Julia Tierney, Kalah Auchincloss—I thank them very much for their passion for the issue and their willingness to work toward a result.

On our staff, in addition to David, I thank Mary-Sumpter Lapinski, Lindsey Seidman, and Grace Stuntz, who did an enormous amount of work, as did Laura Pence. I thank Brett Meeks, Kara Townsend, Melissa Pfaff, Liz Wroe, Margaret Coulter, Curtis Vann, Kathryn Bell, Andrew Burnett, Bobby McMillin, Lowell Schiller, Jim Jeffries, Liz Wolgemuth, Margaret Atkinson, Taylor Haulsee, Alicia Hennie, and Jamie Garden.

We have had an unusual opportunity in this to work across the aisle with Chairman UPTON, Representative PALONE, Representative DEGETTE, and others in the House of Representatives and their staffs. I want to especially thank Speaker RYAN and Senator MCCONNELL. Speaker RYAN did a triple somersault to try to find a funding mechanism that would satisfy both Democrats and Republicans, and Senator MCCONNELL made time on the floor for it. Not everyone is satisfied with the funding mechanism, but we are all voting for it because this is such an important bill.

On Chairman UPTON's staff, I would like to thank Gary Andres, Paul Edattel, John Stone, Carly McWilliams, Adrianna Simonelli, Katie Novaria, James Paluskiewicz, Josh Trent, and Clay Alspach.

On Ranking Member PALLONE's staff, I would like to thank Tiffany Guarascio, Kimberlee Trzeciak, Megan Velez, Waverly Gordon, and Arielle Woronoff.

I would like to thank the hard-working staff of our Senate HELP Committee members, who played important roles in reaching this agreement, including Liz Schwartz with Senator ENZI, Anna Abram and Angela Wiles with Senator BURR, Jordan Bartolomeo with Senator ISAKSON, Natalie Burkhalter with Senator PAUL, Olivia Kurtz and Amanda Lincoln with Senator COLLINS, Chelsea Holt with Senator MURKOWSKI, Cade Clurman and Andrew Vogt with Senator KIRK, Claire Brandewie with Senator SCOTT, Matthew Richardson and Stuart Portman with Senator HATCH, Emily Mueller with Senator ROBERTS, Robb Walton and Brenda Destro with Senator CASSIDY, Jean Doyle with Senator MIKULSKI, Sophie Kasimow with Senator SANDERS, Sarah Mabry with Senator CASEY, Beth Wickler with Senator FRANKEN, Rohini Kosoglu with Senator BENNET, Jennifer DeAngelis with Senator WHITEHOUSE, Kathleen Laird with Senator BALDWIN, and Joe Dunn with Senator MURPHY, and Beth Pearson with Senator WARREN.

From the Senate Finance Committee, I would like to thank Kim

Brandt, Jennifer Kuskowski, Erin Dempsey, Brett Baker, Chris Campbell, and Jay Khosla.

I would also like to thank much of the hard-working staff from the White House and Department of Health and Human Services who provided great help in getting this bill completed.

From the White House, I would like to thank Chief of Staff Denis McDonough and Kate Mevis.

From the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, I would like to thank Secretary Sylvia Burwell, NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, Dr. Kathy Hudson, FDA Commissioner Dr. Robert Califf, Dr. Janet Woodcock, Dr. Jeffrey Shuren, Dr. Karen Desalvo, Acting SAMHSA Administrator Kana Enomoto, Sara Singleton, Jill Adleburg, Dayle Cristinzio, Jennifer Tomasello, Rachel Stauffer, Maren McBride, Karson Mahler, Lauren Higgins, Adrienne Hallett, Laura Berkson, Ned Culhane, Patricia Brandt-Hansberger, Dena Morris, Miranda Katsoyannis, Brian Payne, Brian Altman, and Peggie Rice.

We always rely on the experts at the Congressional Research Service to give us good information in a timely manner, so I extend my thanks to Andrew Nolan, Maeve Carey, and Wendy Ginsberg.

The Senate and House legislative counsel staff worked long hours on the many drafts of this bill, so I would like to extend my thanks to Bill Baird, Jessica Shapiro, Kim Tamber, Katie Grendon, Warren Burke, and Margaret Bomba.

From the Congressional Budget Office, I would like to thank Chad Chirico, Holly Harvey, and Ellen Werble.

On Senator MCCONNELL's staff, I would like to thank Scott Raab.

On Speaker RYAN's staff, I would like to thank Matt Hoffman.

Finally, I would like to thank all the patients, doctors, researchers, innovators, thought leaders, and experts who dedicated time and expertise to helping us come up with this legislation.

I see my colleague, the Senator from Washington, on the floor. I once again thank her for her strong leadership in helping create the environment where 21st Century Cures and the mental health legislation can succeed.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Dec. 6, 2016]

CONGRESS'S CURES BREAKTHROUGH

Medicine moves faster than government, thank goodness, but every now and again government tries to catch up. After years of thoughtful bipartisan work, Congress is now poised to pass the 21st Century Cures Act, a bill designed to accelerate the development of new medicines and modernize a malfunctioning corner of the regulatory state.

The sweeping measure cleared a Senate procedural vote 85-13 on Monday night and passed the House 392-96. These margins are testimony to renewed self-confidence in U.S. innovation and health-care progress, not

much expressed in Washington until recently. A few dead-enders like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are denouncing Cures for its lack of pharmaceutical price controls, which might have become a reality had Hillary Clinton won on Nov. 8.

Cures includes a \$4.8 billion infusion for the National Institutes of Health for basic research. The bill funds the NIH's neurological program on diseases like Alzheimer's, Joe Biden's "cancer moonshot" and rare diseases, while one encouraging earmark is for "high risk, high reward" studies that might not be financed by the private economy.

By the way, these new dollars are slightly offset with budget cuts elsewhere, which exposes the liberal claims of crisis if every program doesn't last forever. Congress is supposed to set priorities.

Perhaps the most promising component of Cures is a new regulatory model for Food and Drug Administration approvals. The FDA remains fused to an outdated clinical model that is too slow, costly and arbitrary. The FDA was not designed to govern an era of genomics, biomarkers, systems biology, artificial intelligence and other advances, not that its own inadequacy has prevented it from trying.

Thus Cures encourages the FDA to supplement classical randomized clinical trials with more information, such as adaptive trial designs that target patient sub-groups who are more likely to benefit. This would allow research to succeed or fail faster at some fraction of the current expense. The agency is also ordered to consider "real-world evidence" in approvals outside of trials.

What the FDA calls "RWE" is controversial because the agency is preoccupied with "proving" how a medicine will perform. But modern trials are so tightly controlled that the results are often artificial, or irrelevant to how a medicine will be used and refined in actual medical practice. In any case, debates about drug approval are never about "proof," but how to interpret evidence of benefits and risks.

The main limitation of Cures is that the problems at FDA aren't due to a shortage of laws. They flow from the agency's institutional culture of control, delay and abuse of regulatory discretion. Cures requires the FDA merely "to evaluate the use of real-world evidence," and this wouldn't be the first political instruction that the bureaucracy has defied.

Still, Cures is a stride toward a more rational and humane drug development system, and legislation is about compromise. The bill could become a useful precedent for successful progress as the 115th Congress starts to take shape next year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all of our colleagues in the House and the Senate who worked so hard to make this bill the best it could be for the patients and families we serve. In particular, I want to express my appreciation to Vice President BIDEN for his leadership, vision, and determination. I especially want to thank the chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator ALEXANDER, for his work and his leadership on this bill, as well as Energy and Commerce Chairman FRED UPTON, Ranking Member FRANK PALLONE, and Congresswoman DIANA DEGETTE.

I would like to reiterate my gratitude to our staff on both sides of the

aisle who put in very long hours and weekends and more to get this legislation finished.

As a result of a lot of strong bipartisan work, we are now sending a bill to the President's desk that will invest in tackling our hardest-to-treat diseases, put real dollars behind the fight against the opioid epidemic, and make badly needed changes to mental health care in our country. I am particularly thankful for the strong bipartisan work of Senator MURPHY and Senator CASSIDY, as well as Congressman MURPHY.

I am confident that I am not alone in saying that I have heard from so many people in my home State about each and every one of these challenges. There are patients and families waiting and hoping for new cures and treatments, people from every walk of life who make clear that the opioid epidemic has cost too many lives and torn too many families apart, and families who have struggled to get loved ones the mental health care they need, and our broken mental health care system got in their way, rather than helping.

I listened to these stories in my home State of Washington. I brought them back and told them here on the Senate floor, and now I am very proud to be taking bipartisan steps to help give patients, families, and communities the relief they need in response to some of the biggest challenges in health care of our time.

Thank you again to all of the Senators who worked on this and all of our colleagues in the House for this bipartisan effort.

I want to thank the Congressional staff from both Houses and both parties who worked so hard over the last 2 years on this legislation.

From my staff, Wade Ackerman, Kalah Auchincloss, Nick Bath, Jane Bigham, Remy Brim, Andi Fristedt, Colin Goldfinch, Megan Howard, Madeline Pannell, Melanie Rainer, Julie Tierney, Elizabeth Wagner, Eli Zupnick, Helen Hare, Evan Schatz, John Righter, Aravind Sreenath, Natalie Kirilichin, and Kate Blizinsky.

From Chairman ALEXANDER's staff David Cleary, Margaret Coulter, MarySumpter Lapinski, Brett Meeks, Laura Pence, Melissa Pfaff, Kara Townshend, Curtis Vann, Lindsey Seidman and Elizabeth Wroe.

From Representative PALLONE's staff, Eric Flamm, Waverley Gordon, Tiffany Guarascio, Rachel Pryor, Kim Trzeciak, Arielle Woronoff, and Megan Velez.

From Chairman UPTON's staff, Paul Edattel, Adrianna Simonelli, John Stone, Carly McWilliams, JP Paluskiewicz, Adam Buckalew, Jay Gulshen and Josh Trent.

Thank you to the staff from all our committee Democrats who worked so hard on the package: from Senator MURPHY's staff, David Bonine and Joe Dunn; from Senator WHITEHOUSE's staff, Jen DeAngelis and Anna Esten; from Senator BALDWIN's staff, Kathleen

Laird and Jasmine Badreddine; from Senator CASEY's staff, Sara Mabry and Doug Hartman; from Senator FRANKEN's staff, Beth Wilder and Rachel Cumberbatch; from Senator BENNET's staff, Rohini Kosoglu and Rina Shah; from Senator MIKULSKI's staff, Jean Doyle, Jessica McNiece, and Amanda Shelton; from Leader REID's staff, Kate Leone and McKenzie Bennet; from Senator SCHUMER's staff, Veronica Duron; from Leader PELOSI's office, Wendell Primus; from Representative HOYER's office, Charlene MacDonald.

Thank you to the tireless staff of the Senate legislative counsel: Kim Tamber, Bill Baird, and Katie Grendon; and Holly Harvey, Ellen Werble and Julia Christensen of the Congressional Budget Office.

At the White House, let me thank Amy Rosebaum, Jeanne Lambrew, Carole Johnson, and Kate Mevis. Each of the agency heads played a crucial role in pushing this bill forward: Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell, National Institutes of Health Director Dr. Francis Collins, Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Robert Califf, Principal Deputy Administrator for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Kana Enomoto, and National Coordinator for Health Information Technology Dr. Vindell Washington and his predecessor Dr. Karen DeSalvo. The staff of each of these agencies did invaluable work over a long period of time: Andrea Palm, Jim Esquea, Sara Singleton, Jeremy Sharp, Dayle Cristinzio, Rachel Sher, Sara Walinsky, Adrienne Hallett, Laura Berkson, Lauren Higgins, Alex Khalife, Rachel Stauffer, Maren McBride, Steven Posnack, Karson Mahler, Tom Coderre, Brian Altman, Brian Payne, Peggie Rice, and Jon White.

I thank Senator ALEXANDER, who has worked diligently across the aisle to get this done.

My sincere thanks to you today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Senator from Washington knows how much I appreciate her leadership and enjoy working with her, and I think we all respect the fact that she enjoys getting results that help the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

VOTE ON MOTION TO CONCUR WITH AMENDMENT
NO. 5117

Mr. ALEXANDER. I move to table the motion to concur with the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table.

The motion was agreed to.

VOTE ON MOTION TO CONCUR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate Amendment to H.R. 34.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 157 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schatz
Cardin	Isakson	Schumer
Carper	Johnson	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Cassidy	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Cruz	McCaskey	Udall
Daines	McConnell	Vitter
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	
Feinstein	Murphy	

NAYS—5

Lee	Sanders	Wyden
Merkley	Warren	

NOT VOTING—1

Cotton

The motion was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany S. 2943, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017.

Mitch McConnell, Deb Fischer, Thom Tillis, Daniel Coats, James M. Inhofe, John Hoeven, Cory Gardner, Orrin G. Hatch, Mark Kirk, Tom Cotton, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Mike Rounds, Lisa Murkowski, Dan Sullivan, John McCain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the conference

report accompanying S. 2943, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 92, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 158 Leg.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Fischer	Nelson
Baldwin	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Franken	Peters
Bennet	Gardner	Portman
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Blunt	Grassley	Reid
Booker	Hatch	Risch
Boozman	Heinrich	Roberts
Boxer	Heitkamp	Rounds
Brown	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hirono	Sasse
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cardin	Isakson	Scott
Carper	Johnson	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Collins	Lankford	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Manchin	Tillis
Cornyn	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskey	Udall
Cruz	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	

NAYS—7

Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden
Lee	Paul	
Markey	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—1

Cotton

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 92, the nays are 7.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the conference report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany S. 2943, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators who wish to speak in honor of the Presiding Officer be recognized in the following order for up to 4 minutes each: me, the majority leader Senator MCCONNELL, the minority leader Senator REID, Senator SCHUMER, Senator HATCH, Senator LEAHY, Senator MCCAIN, Senator DURBIN, Senator ISAKSON, Senator MURRAY, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator COLLINS, Senator MIKULSKI, and Senator CARPER.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Delaware amend his request so that Senator MCCONNELL and I will use our leader time. That will not count against his hour.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Delaware.

TRIBUTES TO VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President—and it does bring me some joy to call you Mr. President. I am honored to be here today with so many of our colleagues, and I am grateful to Majority Leader MCCONNELL and Leader REID for their enthusiasm in pulling together this bipartisan tribute. I am honored to be joined by my senior Senator from Delaware, TOM CARPER, who will make closing remarks this afternoon.

Before I begin, I would like to remind my colleagues that there will be a reception for the Vice President in the Mansfield Room, after we conclude here, beginning sometime after 4. We have many Senators who wish to speak so we will move quickly through the order. I encourage my colleagues to submit their remarks for the RECORD, those who are not able to speak in the next hour. Their remarks will be combined with all the other remarks given on the floor, and the resulting speeches printed, bound, and presented to the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, in a place known these days for some disagreements, my colleagues—our colleagues, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—are all here today because we agree on one powerful and simple thing: our deep gratitude for the difference you have made in your decades in public service.

The greatest honor of my life is to serve in the seat that you held for 36 years—and not just literally this seat in the Senate but also a seat on the 7:15 Amtrak train down from Wilmington

every morning. You logged over 2 million miles on Amtrak and millions more traveling around the world fighting for our country, and as long as I have the privilege of representing our State in the Senate, I will be humbled by the challenge of living up to your legacy of fighting for and making a real difference for the people of our shared home.

Like so many Americans, I have long been inspired by your loyalty to your family, and I am so glad to see so many familiar faces in the Gallery today. This job requires a strong partner and teammate, and to Dr. Biden, Jill, your unwavering support for your family, for Delaware, and your country is something for which we are all deeply grateful.

As a son of Delaware, and of Catherine Eugenia and Joe Senior, you have never forgotten from where you came or for whom you are fighting. Even as Vice President, our fellow Delawareans have the blessing of a surprise visit week in and week out, to see you at the Columbus Day breakfast or Return Day or St. Anthony's Procession.

Whether meeting personally with world leaders you have known for decades, whether chairing the Judiciary or Foreign Relations Committees or just stopping by a Claymont diner, there is universal agreement about what you have brought to this work—your passion, your heart, your character, and your integrity. That is because you genuinely listen to people, you ask them questions, and then you lift them up. We know that when you give us your word as a BIDEN, you mean it, and you will keep it.

Your service as a Senator stands as a model for all of our colleagues and for me. Through challenging times, you always worked across the aisle, through eight Presidents. You were willing to reach across to anyone willing to roll up their sleeves and get to work for the American people.

So many families across Delaware and this country and I, myself, as we have struggled with loss—maybe the loss of a job or loss of hope or the impending loss of a loved one—have experienced the incredible personal comfort and power of a call from you. When it comes to providing advice and inspiration that touches our hearts and makes a real difference, no one—no one—is better than you. We know you will share our challenges, you will give us meaningful comfort and encourage us, and you will fight for us.

As we look ahead to next year and beyond, I know you and Jill have so much more great and good work to do, starting with the fight to cure cancer through the Cancer Moonshot. This next chapter will be every bit as exciting and meaningful as the life of service you have led for 44 years. What an honor to see you in that chair earlier this week as the majority leader led the Senate in a unanimous vote to rename a title of the 21st Century Cures cancer initiative after Beau. That bill,

which we passed finally just an hour ago, would not have happened without your leadership.

Now, let me close with a line you know all too well, a line you shared countless times in this Chamber, sometimes from this very desk. As the Irish poet Seamus Heaney once wrote, "History says, don't hope on this side of the grave. But then, once in a lifetime, the longed-for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme."

No one, sir, no one has done more to make hope and history rhyme than you. Thank you, Mr. President, for your service, your counsel, your advice, your friendship, and your leadership.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, who has been so generous with floor time and support this afternoon.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is great to see the Presiding Officer back in the Senate. It is good news for everyone he is in the chair. Good news for him because, as Senator COONS said, the rest of us have to call him "Mr. President." Good news for the rest of us because he has to let everyone else talk.

The amazing thing is, the man we honor today wasn't always a talker. He suffered from a debilitating stutter for most of his childhood. He was teased for it, but he was determined to overcome it, and so he did—with hard work, with determination, with the support of his family. It is classic JOE BIDEN. He has never stopped talking since.

He cites overcoming that stutter as one of the most important lessons in his life. It led him down a path few might have foreseen: winning election to the county council, securing an improbable victory for the U.S. Senate, becoming our Nation's 47th Vice President.

Now, the Presiding Officer would be the first to tell you that he has been blessed in many ways. He has also been tested, knocked down, pushed to the edge of what anyone could be expected to bear, but from the grip of unknowable despair came a new man—a better man: stronger and more compassionate, grateful for every moment, appreciative of what really matters.

Here in the Senate he heeded the advice of Mike Mansfield. Here is what Senator Mansfield had to say:

Your job here is to find the good things in your colleagues. And, Joe, never attack another man's motive, because you don't know his motive.

Look for the good. Don't attack motives. It is the basis of a simple philosophy and a very powerful one.

Vice President BIDEN says he views his competitors as competitors, not enemies, and he has been able to cultivate many unlikely friendships across the aisle—with Jesse Helms, with Strom Thurmond, with me.

Over the years, we have worked together on issues of mutual interest,

like Burma—and regarding the vote we just took a few moments ago—21st Century Cures, and the Cancer Moonshot.

We have also negotiated in good faith when the country needed bipartisan leadership. We got results that would not have been possible without a negotiating partner like JOE BIDEN. Obviously, I don't always agree with him, but I do trust him implicitly. He doesn't break his word. He doesn't waste time telling me why I am wrong. He gets down to brass tacks, and he keeps in sight the stakes. There is a reason "Get JOE on the phone" is shorthand for "time to get serious" in my office.

The Vice President is a likeable guy too. He has a well-developed sense of humor. He doesn't take himself too seriously either. When The Onion ran a mock photo of him washing a Trans-Am in the White House driveway, shirtless, Americans embraced it, and so did he. "I think it's hilarious," he said, but "by the way, I have a Corvette—'67 Corvette—not a Trans-Am." So you see what I mean.

JOE BIDEN may exist in the popular imagination aboard an Amtrak, but this son of a used car salesman will always be a muscle guy at heart.

And what a road he has traveled, from New Castle to the Naval Observatory, from Scranton to the Senate. His journey in this body began by the side of those who loved him; hand on the Bible, heart in a knot, swearing the same oath he now administers to others. It is a journey that ends now by the side of those who care about him still—those like his wife Jill, who understands the full life he has lived.

Here is a man who has known great joy, who has been read his last rites, and who has never lost himself along the way.

"Champ," his father used to say, "the measure of a man is not how often he is knocked down, but how quickly he gets up." That is JOE BIDEN right there—unbowed, unbroken, and unable to stop talking.

It is my privilege to convey the Senate's warm wishes to the Vice President on this Delaware Day as the next steps of his long journey come into view. There are many here who feel this way in both parties.

I am reminded of something the Presiding Officer said when he addressed the University of Louisville several years ago. It was one of the McConnell Center's most popular lectures ever. And as I sat beside him, he offered his theory as to why that might be: I think you're all here today—remember, these are young people, students. He said: I think you are all here today because "you want to see whether or not a Republican and Democrat really like each other," he said. "Well," he continued, flashing a smile, "I'm here to tell you we do." It was true then, and it is true today.

I hope the Presiding Officer won't mind if I conclude with some words directed to the Chair.

Mr. President, you have been a real friend, you have been a trusted partner, and it has been an honor to serve with you. We are all going to miss you. Godspeed.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The minority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, to everyone listening, JOE BIDEN's life has been the material of which movies are made.

JOE was born in Scranton, PA, to Joe and Jean Biden, the first of four children. As a young man, as we have heard about today—once in a while, though not very often, Senator BIDEN talks about his stammering. He didn't get any professional help, no therapy. He did it on his own, long hours of reading, mostly poetry. He would stand in front of a mirror and recite poetry time after time after time, watching himself to make sure he didn't contort his face when he stammered or stuttered. This wasn't easy for a young man. People made fun of him, but he knew he could do it on his own. He felt that, and he did it. He worked hard. He developed a rhythm and a cadence of speaking that helped him overcome his stammer to become one of the United States Senate's all-time great orators, without any qualification.

JOE was an outstanding high school running back and wide receiver. His coach said he had never seen anyone with such hands. His coach saw in JOE what we all see, a hard worker who refuses to fail. His coach said:

Joe was a skinny kid. But he was one of the best pass receivers I had in 16 years as a coach.

In college, JOE continued to display his athletic prowess, playing football for the University of Delaware.

This is quite a story. During spring break, his junior year—JOE and I were traveling from Indianapolis to Reno, NV, and he talked to me about this, just the two of us. I will never forget that conversation. He and one of his college buddies had gotten a tax return, and they were going to take a little vacation away from the cold of Delaware. They went to Florida. Frankly, they didn't like it. They had a few dollars left over from their tax returns, and I believe they went to the Bahamas. They got an inexpensive hotel. I was going to say "cheap," but I will say "inexpensive" hotel.

Right next to them was an exclusive hotel, and they noticed when the people came out of the fancy hotel off that private beach, many times they would lay their towels on the fence. JOE and his pal said: Well, those towels aren't even wet. They went down to that private beach, and it was there that he met a young woman by the name of Neilia, Neilia Hunter. I am sure that, just like Jill, she must have been a knockout to look at. She went to the University of Syracuse. She was on the dean's list. She had been homecoming queen.

That was the beginning of the relationship that they had. JOE had been smitten. After graduating from the

University of Delaware, he enrolled in law school in Syracuse to be closer to her.

The story of his and Neilia's relationship is stunning. I repeat, it was something that movies are made of. Without being too personal, I will say it the way it is because it is a wonderful story, and I can identify with it so well because of Landra and me. There came a time when her father came to her and said: You know, he is not that much. He comes from a family that is not like ours. And she said: Dad, stop. If you make me choose between you and JOE, I am going to choose JOE.

So that was that relationship. I repeat, Landra and I understand that story quite well. They were married a short time later. They had three children, Beau, Hunter, and Naomi.

After starting his law practice and serving as city councilman in New Castle, DE, JOE stunned and embarrassed a few of his friends and relatives by saying he was going to run for the Senate.

You will run for the Senate against a two-term incumbent, Caleb Boggs?

I think I can do it.

I am sure he said to himself: A lot of people said I couldn't overcome certain things, and I did, and I am going to do my best to overcome this race I am in. I am starting way behind.

JOE and his family went at this as hard as they could. They canvassed the entire State. They pulled off an incredible upset. JOE Biden was elected to the U.S. Senate. In every respect, JOE's life has been unique. It has been special. His election to the Senate was no different.

The great Constitution that leads this Nation stipulates that the person must be 30 years old to be elected to the Senate. JOE was 29 on election day. He turned 30 2 weeks after the election. Just a few weeks later, tragedy struck and struck really hard. Neilia and their three children were in a terrible car accident just days before Christmas. He had not been sworn in as a Senator yet.

His wife was killed, their baby girl was killed, and Beau and Hunter were grievously injured—hospitalized, of course. To say JOE was grief-stricken is an understatement. How can you describe how he felt? I am sure, as I have heard, he didn't know what to do. He had two boys to raise. He wasn't a man of great means. He strongly considered: I shouldn't be sworn in to the Senate; I can't do this.

He had friends, people who didn't know him who were Senators, who treated him as fathers. Without the help of Valerie, his sister, JOE BIDEN's life may have been completely different because with the support he got from her, the encouragement he got from Democratic and Republican Senators, and the fact that she moved in, took care of Beau and Hunter to replace their mom—she was there for 4 years helping with those boys.

JOE is a remarkable man. When I was in the House of Representatives, he agreed to come to the house in Nevada

for me. It was a big deal to get this senior Senator to come to Nevada. He came. Every place he traveled, he had one of his boys with him.

With the support of his sister and other members of his family, JOE embarked on a long, storied, 36-year career that was productive and unsurpassed in the history of the Senate.

That was not the end of JOE's difficulties. JOE is, as you can see now, a very well-conditioned man. He always has been. As a Senator, he suffered a massive bleed on the brain, and he was hospitalized for a long time. He didn't come to the Senate for a long time. When I got hurt, one of the first people to call me was JOE. He said: Look, the fact you are going to be missing a little time in the Senate doesn't mean you can't be a good Senator. That was the example that JOE BIDEN set.

He recovered, and he became chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Foreign Relations chair, author of many pieces of legislation—Violence Against Women—too numerous to mention.

In a love story unsurpassed, he also met a woman who has been by his side for 40 years, Jill Biden. It is an incredible love story. JOE says it was love at first sight. It was the same for his boys. JOE remembers the day that Beau and Hunter came to him with the recommendation: "Daddy, we were talking and we think we should marry Jill," not he should marry Jill. "We should marry Jill," a direct quote.

JOE and Jill were married, and before long, Beau and Hunter had a new sister, Ashley, and a new mom. There is not a family that I know of who is any closer, more tight-knit than the Bidens. JOE BIDEN loves his family above all else. He is a good Senator, a terrific Vice President, but he is a family man.

For the last 8 years as Vice President, he has traveled the world, meeting with dignitaries in trouble spots on behalf of this country, oftentimes at the direction of President Obama. He has done it with dignity—more than a million miles.

As we have heard from the junior Senator from Delaware, that pales in comparison to the miles he has traveled on Amtrak. He has traveled more than 2 million miles on Amtrak. He took the train home every night to Delaware. If we worked late, he would go to a hotel here. If it had been necessary, he would have gone more than 2 million miles to take care of his boys and to be with Jill.

Vice President BIDEN's time serving at President Obama's side has been historic. He has been the President's rock, his confidant, and his friend. I have been told that not by JOE BIDEN but by the President. JOE has had a stellar career as Vice President of our great country. He has used his skills and his experience to help shape American diplomacy.

Vice President BIDEN is helping lead the quest for a cure for cancer. His

Moonshot initiative is the most ambitious plan ever to accelerate cancer research. I say, through the Chair, to my friend LAMAR ALEXANDER, that this would not have happened but for the good man from Tennessee.

We know that JOE and Jill know firsthand the pain and heartache caused by cancer and the toll it takes on families. Tragically, just last year, Beau was diagnosed with terminal cancer, which took his life. He was somebody I knew well. He was an Iraq veteran. He didn't have to go to Iraq, but he did. He was attorney general of the State of Delaware.

Beau was a light to everyone who knew him but especially to his family. Beau's passing broke JOE's, Hunter's, and Jill's hearts and, of course, their sister's. As with all the other heart-breaking challenges and setbacks, JOE BIDEN continues his life's work. He is still the same kid that his coach praised. His No. 1 asset is that he works hard; he does the best he can.

JOE BIDEN continues to serve his country, and he will continue after January 20. He continues to do what is right. And above all, he continues to love and take care of his family.

I have been gratified to call Senator BIDEN a man of the Senate, Senator BIDEN, Vice President BIDEN, JOE. He is an awe-inspiring man, so Steven Spielberg, Hollywood, you should be listening. JOE BIDEN's life is that which movies are made of.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is such a pleasure and honor to rise to recognize a great son of Scranton—sitting next to me, another son of Scranton—a grandson of Ireland—sitting in this Chamber are many grandchildren of Ireland—and a Syracuse University graduate. How many others in the room can say that? More importantly than any of those, he is one of the most dedicated public servants, one of the most successful public servants I have ever had the pleasure to serve with during my time in Washington.

Everyone knows JOE is proud of his ancestry. His ancestors came from Ireland, as many millions have. He is deeply proud of being an Irish-American. Like so many others from the Emerald Isle, our Vice President inherited the gift of gab, and thank God for that because he has used his booming voice to speak out on so many issues.

We have only a little time today. I know my colleagues are eager to speak, so I will just focus on one of the issues that Senator BIDEN led the charge on and changed America. I worked with him on the Assault Weapons Ban and the Brady law when he was a Senator and I was Congressman and we were each head of the crime committees. But maybe the thing he was proudest of was the Violence Against Women Act. It sounds like a different world, but a few years ago, a few decades ago, rape and domestic violence and abuse

were considered in many ways lesser crimes—crimes in which the victim was as much at fault as the perpetrator. It was disgraceful. If you were beaten, abused, sexually assaulted, you faced a hostile, skeptical criminal justice system. That got at JOE BIDEN and his sense of justice, so he exploded the myths behind domestic violence.

I remember hearing the speeches against sexual abuse and put together the strongest ever violence against women law on the books. Not only did the law make women safer; it made men better. It moved our society forward.

Our work on these issues is not nearly over, but I am certain there are literally millions of women who have avoided pain and suffering—both physical and mental—because of the courage, the steadfastness, and the legislative brilliance of the then-senior Senator from the great State of Delaware.

I could go on and on and almost write a book on accomplishments like that where JOE almost singlehandedly changed the world. He was also a great friend and leader to so many of us.

I will conclude with one little story. I was elected to the Senate after 18 years in the House, and an issue I wanted to get going on was college affordability. I had run for the Senate on the promise of making college tuition tax deductible. So I get to the Senate, introduce my bill, make my speech, and get ready to lead the way on what I thought was my issue. We have all experienced this. A call comes into my office from JOE's chief of staff. Of course I spoke to him. "Mr. Biden has been working on this issue for 10 years. Go work on something else." That was the nice version. Naturally, me and my brandnew office were in a panic. I was chastened. I didn't know what to do. I am sitting on the floor and feeling really forlorn. Why did I even come here? I was a senior Member of the House. I feel an arm on my shoulder, and I look up. There is the revered and exalted Senator JOE BIDEN. He says to me: I understand you have your college tuition tax deduction bill. Go ahead, take the issue. I know what it is like for new Senators to carve their own path.

How many times can any freshman say any senior Senator has said that to them? They can't because he is unique. Not only is he a towering figure and superb man, but he has a good heart and looks out for the Members of this body. He always has, does to this day, and always will because I know in JOE's heart, with all of his accomplishments, he is still a Senator—our Senator.

Mr. President, I say to Mr. Vice President, thank you. Thank you for your heart and passion, thank you for bringing every ounce of yourself to public service, and thank you for that lesson of humility and leadership you taught me when I first came to this Chamber.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is an honor for me to rise and talk about our friendship and what you have done for this country.

I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated public servant, distinguished leader, and dear friend, Vice President JOE BIDEN.

For more than three decades, I had the distinct privilege of serving alongside JOE in the U.S. Senate. As anyone who worked closely with JOE can tell you, he was no ordinary Senator. He had boundless energy and undeniable charm. He paired an unmatched work ethic with a disarming smile that dared you not to smile back. JOE's innate ability to befriend anyone—and I mean anyone, including his fiercest political opponents—was critical to his success as a legislator. His genuine sincerity endeared him to all, and his gregariousness transcended partisan boundaries.

Even in the most polarizing debates, JOE never let politics stand in the way of friendship. One minute JOE could be scolding you from the Senate floor, and the next minute he could be hugging you in the hallway, cracking jokes and asking about your grandkids. I am, of course, speaking from plenty of personal experience. It is no secret that JOE and I often found ourselves on opposite sides of almost every major issue—that is not quite true. We agreed on a lot of things. In countless legislative battles, JOE proved himself to be a worthy political opponent and an able sparring partner. Whether on the Senate floor or in the Judiciary Committee hearing room, JOE and I locked horns on a number of occasions, sometimes on a daily basis. Indeed, we were at odds about as often as we were on C-SPAN.

At the end of the day, I couldn't help but admire the man. You see, JOE BIDEN was beloved by everyone in this Chamber, even those he drove crazy from time to time, and I count myself among that group. Through his ability to forge friendship even amid conflict, he embodies the ethos of a noble generation of legislators—a generation that embraced the virtues of comity and compromise above all else. I believe this body—indeed, this Nation—could learn from JOE's example of kindness, courtesy, and compassion.

For 17 years, then-Senator BIDEN served as chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, overseeing some of the most significant court appointments of our time. Chairing the Senate Judiciary Committee is no easy task. I know because I have been there. The committee boasts some of the biggest egos on this side of the Potomac—or this side of the Milky Way, for that matter. It takes a certain kind of political genius to navigate the assertive personalities and lofty ambitions of its members, but JOE was more than up to the task. As both chairman and ranking member, he was tough and tenacious but also decent and fair. Through his trademark

work ethic, he won the respect of every member of that committee.

JOE also served admirably as the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. In this capacity, he played an indispensable role in shaping American foreign policy. When President Obama tapped JOE to be his Vice President, the Senate lost a seasoned statesman, but our Nation gained a wise and capable leader with unparalleled experience in public affairs.

JOE was the administration's bridge to Congress, often serving as an intermediary between the President and legislators. On more than one occasion, his close relationship with lawmakers and his deft negotiating skills helped our Nation to overcome some of its greatest obstacles. He was the President's trusted emissary and an invaluable asset in helping Congress resolve the fiscal cliff dilemma in late 2012—something I wasn't sure we could resolve. He was also a brilliant ambassador for our country, leveraging his foreign policy expertise in meetings with leaders across the world.

I am deeply grateful for my friend JOE BIDEN. I have long admired his devotion to his family, as well as his grace amid suffering, and he did suffer, and I know it. I was here. Having experienced tremendous loss in his family life, he draws from a rich reservoir of empathy to connect with everyday Americans. Ask anyone Vice President BIDEN has served: When you speak, JOE listens. He loves, and he cares. He is perhaps the most personable public figure in American politics today.

In the nearly 8 years he has served as Vice President, JOE BIDEN has become a fixture of American public life. Today, I wish to join my colleagues in thanking Vice President JOE BIDEN for his dedication to the American people. Although his tenure as Vice President is drawing to a close, I am confident that his service to our Nation will only continue. This is said by a Republican who loves JOE BIDEN and believes he is one of the truly great people who served here in this body.

I just want JOE BIDEN to know that we all respect him, and I think most all of us love him. Those of us who have worked with him really appreciated how he would from time to time put his arm around us, put politics aside, and speak the truth.

JOE BIDEN is a wonderful man. I wish him the absolute best as we go into the future, and I will be there to help if he needs it.

God bless JOE BIDEN.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I enjoy calling you by that title. I hope you do, too—because you know that you could easily hold that title as President of this body or President of the United States—you have shown your qualifications for either one.

But let me speak about your role as President of the Senate. It makes you

a Member of this body, a body that can be, and on some occasions has been, the conscience of the Nation. You have served longer in this body than any other member here. The fact is you came here 2 years before I did, so as the other longest serving member, I look at you as my senior Senator, and I am delighted to be your junior.

I think back to some of the things we did together, Mr. President. I remember when I was running for the Senate in Vermont in 1974, and people told me I was far too young to get elected to the Senate at 34 years old. My predecessor was somebody who had been elected here when I was born and served there until I arrived. You put your arm around me and you said, it would be nice to have an older person that I could look up to. I believe you were 32, and I was 34. But that helped.

Of course, little did I know until I came here how closely we would work together. We served on the Judiciary Committee throughout that time. We worked on such duties as Supreme Court nominations, civil rights, and the criminal justice system. Then, when you were chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and bringing the rest of the world American values—which happened to be JOE BIDEN values—how I enjoyed traveling with you.

I think of the time, Mr. President, when you and I, and our wives, Jill and Marcelle traveled together. We had been good friends throughout all of that time. I will take the liberty of telling one story. When the four of us were in Paris, we had gone out to dinner. It was a cold, winter night. We were coming back. I think Marcelle mentioned that the Eiffel Tower lights up on the hour. You and Jill stood on a bench and were hugging each other, the Eiffel Tower behind you. I snapped a picture. Now, we had a close friendship. We never lied to each other, but that was one time I lied to you because you asked me, "Where is the picture?" I said, I think I lost it. I apologize. We were conspiring to print out that picture, and I know your wonderful wife gave it to you for a wedding anniversary present with words to the effect that you "light up her life."

Well, you lit up many, many lives. I think of our Irish bond of friendship, stories I can't tell. Some of those closed-door sessions with other Irish-Americans, such as Pat Moynihan, Chris Dodd, and Ted Kennedy, when we would have some holy water together. Somehow it came from Ireland. It was usually at least 12 years old. And we would tell Irish stories. And after 42 years here, I know the rules well enough, I can't repeat any of those stories here. But they were good ones because it was a friendship and we worked together. We learned how to bring in others from both parties.

And, Mr. President, I remember you and others showing all of us how to find common ground, and we did things together. And I respect you so much

for that. I must admit, I learned something else on the Judiciary Committee. I learned the Amtrak schedule because, if we had a meeting that was going on a little bit long, we were reminded what time the train was going to Delaware. I know you kept in good shape because you could run to the station in 3 minutes and get on the train, where you would go home to Beau and Hunter and, later, Jill and Ashley—because even though you were a leader in the United States Senate, and later Vice President, you were, first and foremost, a father and a husband.

You and I and Marcelle talked about that this summer, when you came to Vermont for the Cancer Moonshot. I told you what an important part of our lives you have been. You have gone through tragedy and glory, but you have remained yourself throughout all of it.

And the memories of those evenings when you let this Irish-Italian boy come in and sit as a member of the Irish—we would speak of our values, we would speak of America, we would speak of friendship. That is why I admire you, Mr. President, and I am glad to be here on the floor with you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in addressing a few thoughts directly to the occupant of the chair, to commend his long and honorable service to the United States and to thank him for his friendship. Mr. President—I know how much you enjoy my calling you Mr. President—you and I have served together in this body for three decades. We have been friends for almost 40 years, since I was the Navy Senate liaison and used to carry your bags on overseas trips.

I joked recently that I resented it ever since. But that was part of my job description—escorting and handling logistics for Senate codels, including making certain everyone's luggage arrived at our destinations. Back then, some Senators, unlike the 100 egalitarians who occupy the Senate today, could be a little haughty and high-handed. A few held an exalted opinion of themselves that exceeded the esteem with which their colleagues and constituents held them in. If they paid any attention to staff, it was only because we had annoyed them somehow.

But not my friend JOE BIDEN—he was fair and courteous to everyone, even people who did not always deserve it. He is always an example of how a powerful person with character and class treats anyone in a subordinate position. He treats them with humility, as God's children, with dignity equal to his own.

In the book "The Nightingale's Song," the late journalist Bob Timberg wrote about one military liaison officer, escorting a codel to Athens, who joined some of the Members in a tavern for a little after-hours merriment and

was later observed dancing on a table-top with Senator BIDEN's lovely wife, Jill.

I don't recall witnessing such an event myself, and I can't testify to it having actually happened. Neither can I imagine the temerity of that rascal, whoever he was. He was lucky the Senator whose spouse he made endure awkward moves he euphemistically called "dancing" was JOE BIDEN. Few other Senators would have seen the humor in it.

Many years have passed since we shared those adventures, and many events have transpired, personal and public, that enriched our lives with the rewards and disappointments, blessings and challenges. We were still young when we came to the Senate. We are old men now. Although you can't tell from looking at us, the Vice President is actually a little younger than me, though we both passed the Biblical threescore and ten.

This place, the Senate, has been central to both of our lives. Here we work together on our country's challenges. Here we fought and argued over the country's direction. Here we compromised and joined forces to serve the public interest. Here we watched history made and made our small contributions to it. Neither of us is the shy and retiring type. We both have been known to hold a strong opinion or two. When circumstances warrant, we would rather make our points emphatically than elliptically. I know that JOE appreciates the adage that I have tried to follow in my public life: a fight not joined is a fight not enjoyed.

When we have had differences of opinions over the years, we have managed to make our positions crystal clear to each other, perhaps in the persistent triumph of hope over experience. We both still cling to the expectation that we can persuade the other that he is mistaken. I think deep down we probably know better.

In addition to being regularly mistaken, here is what I have also known about my friend and occasionally sparring partner. He is a good and decent man, God-fearing and kind, a devoted father and husband, a genuine patriot who puts our country before himself. I know, too, that it has been a great privilege to call him my friend.

Mr. President, if I haven't made clear to you over these many years how much I appreciated your friendship and have admired you, I beg your forgiveness. We both have been privileged to know Members of this body who were legends in their own time and are remembered as important historical figures. But I haven't known one who was a better man than you. You are an exemplary public servant, a credit to your family, to the Senate, and to the country.

On behalf of the country and the Senate, thank you for your lifetime service to America. Thank you for your example of how to represent your constituents with honor and humility and how

to remain the same good guy that you were when you first got here. Thank you, most of all, for your friendship. My life and the lives of many have been enriched by it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there is a story about an Irishman walking down the street. He passes two guys who are fighting. He asks them: Is this a private fight or can anybody get into it?

Well, you know a little bit about that; don't you, Mr. Vice President? For 40 years or more, you have always been ready to fight for those who needed a champion and never walked away from a good fight for a good cause. Your public career has been marked by so many amazing victories but also by unbearable losses and sorrows. You have had joys and passions, determinations and immense accomplishments.

The list of your legislative achievements has been recounted on the floor today. One of them I am sure you are most proud of is the Violence Against Women Act. You made a big difference in the lives of so many people whom you will never meet, in protecting them and giving them hope in a hopeless circumstance.

Between 1993, when your bill was passed, and 2010, the rate of violence against intimate partners—almost all women—declined by 67 percent in the United States. We often wonder here, when bills we take to law are passed and signed by the President, whether they can make a difference. We know that your unsparing effort when it came to violence against women made a significant difference.

I had that in mind 9 years ago when I was riding around Florida in a recreational vehicle. It was with my fellow Senator from Illinois by the name of Barack Obama. He was running for President, and we were in the back of this RV as he was cruising through Florida. We were talking about potential running mates, someone who could be his Vice President.

We went through a short list. We came to your name, and I said to the soon-to-be President, then Senator and my colleague: You couldn't pick a better choice than JOE BIDEN. I know him as a person. I know him as a fellow Senator. I know his heart. You would be blessed to have him on your team.

He made that choice, even though at the beginning, I am sure both of you wondered: Is this going to work? It did. It did for your purpose and for his and for America's. I am reminded of that famous poet Seamus Heaney. He wrote:

History says, Don't hope
On this side of the grave,
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed-for tidal wave
Justice can rise up,
And hope and history rhyme.

Obama-Biden—hope and history certainly did rhyme. The things that you have been able to achieve with this

President have made a difference in America to millions of lives. Whether we are talking about coming out of a recession where we were losing 800,000 jobs a month, making sure that Wall Street didn't make the same mistakes again at the expense of businesses and families across America, or making sure that some father did not face the heartbreak of a sick child with no health insurance. You made a difference in their lives.

Just this week, there is the Cancer Moonshot. Who knows, Mr. Vice President, what will happen as a result of that investment in your son's name. But I sense that something good is going to happen for a lot of people around this country. I am glad that the BIDEN name is closely associated with it.

Mr. President, there is an old story—a joke—about the Pope. The story goes that the day came when he said to his driver: You know, I haven't had a chance to drive the car in a long time. Why don't you sit in the back and I'll drive.

The story goes that the Pope started driving the car and started speeding and got pulled over. This policeman looked inside the car, then looked out again, and looked back and said: Excuse me. He got on his cell phone and he called the police station. He said: I have an extraordinary circumstance here. I have just pulled over a car with someone very important in it.

They said: Well, who is it?

He said: I don't know who he is, but he has the Pope for a driver.

The reason I remember that story is that one time I was on Air Force Two with Vice President JOE BIDEN. We flew you home to Delaware. I was going to catch an Amtrak train at Wilmington, and I asked you to drop me off.

You said: No, I'm going to take you up to the train.

So we get up to the train, and the train is pulling in the station. You look at what I have for a ticket and you said: That ticket is not good. You need a real ticket. I will get it for you.

You grabbed it and took off running, with the Secret Service trailing behind you as the train pulled into the station. I am thinking: Am I going to make this train? Is he going to make it back? You came running up the steps with the Secret Service trailing behind you while the train was stopped. All of these passengers were looking as the Vice President of the United States ran up to me, handed me a ticket, and said: Go ahead and get on the train.

Now, the people on the train had no idea who I was, but they knew if the Vice President was carrying my ticket, I must be somebody important.

Let me say one personal word. You and your wife Jill really embody what I consider to be the best of public life—not only your commitment to people who are less fortunate around the world but your genuine sense of caring and your good heart, both of you. I recall when my colleague Marty Russo of

Illinois had a son who was sick with cancer. There was one person who called every day to make sure that he was doing well.

Well, that is the way you not only build a friendship but you build a reputation as not just a glad-handing politician but someone who really, really cares. I have been honored to count you as a friend. I am honored that the President whom I love chose you as his Vice President. I am honored that we have served in the Senate together and that I can tell my kids and grandkids. I wish you the best whatever life brings you next.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a person who has had a tremendous impact on my life and my career in the Senate and also a tremendous impact on my country, the United States of America. I still remember to this day the date and time MITCH MCCONNELL called me in 2007 and said: Hey, we have an opening for a Republican on Foreign Relations and nobody will take it. Will you take it?

I did not know if that was a benefit—a perk or whoever—but I said: Anytime you are offered a gift, don't look a gift horse in the face. So I did it.

Two days later, JOE BIDEN saw me at the committee and said: I am glad you joined our committee. I am glad to have you. I have an opening on the Africa Subcommittee. I can't get a Republican to take it. Will you do it?

I said: Mr. BIDEN, I have never been to Africa.

He said: Well, you will soon. How about taking it?

I did. I have been to Africa 12 times since. It has become a passion in my career, and I give Vice President BIDEN a lot of credit for the influence he had on that. I also remember the day when the mock swearing-in took place down on the second floor, and I had my nine grandchildren here to watch me being sworn into the Senate.

At the mock signing ceremony, JOE stood there, and we all raised our hand, and we repeated the ceremony that we had done on the floor. Then JOE greeted each one of my grandchildren one by one as they walked by. When little Jack, who was then 7 years old, stopped, JOE BIDEN said: Jack, what do you like about the Capitol?

Jack said: Well, Mr. Vice President, there is no Lego store.

JOE BIDEN said: The next time you come here, there will be one.

I want to tell the Vice President that he is coming on January 2 to see me sworn in again. I have already bought the Lego box. It is on the desk in my hideaway, and I am going to tell him that Vice President JOE made sure he had Legos when he came back to the Capitol. You know the real character of a man and the real credit to a man is what influence he has on children. I can tell you from that story, it is just one of many that JOE BIDEN has had.

On me, personally, I will never forget the day JOE BIDEN called me as Vice

President of the United States and said: JOHNNY, I have got the mayor of Baltimore and the mayor of Philadelphia going with me to Panama City next week to look at the deepening of the Panama Canal. I know Savannah's port is important to you. I know you have been fighting with us to get the authorization you need to deepen the Port of Savannah. How about flying with me down there and let's take a look at it and let's do a press conference together. And I did and he did and we did, and today the Port of Savannah is being deepened to 47 feet. Panamax ships will be sailing through it in 4 more years. I am convinced it would not have happened at the level of the administration had it not been for JOE BIDEN, the Vice President of the United States but more importantly my friend.

JOE, I don't have the words to adequately tell you how much I appreciate you as a person and as a leader, but there is a little poem I know that says more about what you really are than anything I could say.

I'd rather see a sermon
Than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me
Than merely tell the way.
The eye's a better pupil
And more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing
But example's always clear;
And the best of all preachers
Are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action
Is what everybody needs.
I soon can learn to do it
If you'll let me see it done;
I can watch your hands in action,
But your tongue too fast may run.
And the lecture you deliver
May be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lessons
By observing what you do;
For I might misunderstand you
And the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding
How you act and how you live.

JOE, you have lived the life of a patriot and you act like a gentleman. You are my friend, and may God bless you and your family and thank you for your service to the country and your friendship to me.

I yield back.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President—and it is a pleasure to say that. Some may know him as “the guy in the aviators” debarking Air Force Two or the man in the 1967 Corvette in the viral Internet video, gleeful, as he had the rare opportunity to drive himself around in his favorite car.

Mr. President, it is so clear that the American public has embraced this grinning, approachable, unstoppable life force known as Vice President JOE BIDEN, but little do many Americans know of the heart of our Vice President. They have caught glimpses of it in 1972, when his wife and daughter were killed in a terrible car accident and his two sons severely injured. It is hard to imagine that kind of devasta-

tion, and JOE picked himself up and was sworn in to his first term in the U.S. Senate from his son's hospital room.

Maybe they saw it last year when JOE's son Beau, following in his father's footsteps to be an extraordinary public servant and, more importantly, a wonderful father, lost a long and hard-fought battle with cancer. I know as a mother and grandmother myself that I will never understand what JOE went through.

Mr. President, again, JOE picked himself up and continued to serve our country as a strong, dedicated Vice President in the midst of a raucous election season when Americans needed him the most. JOE BIDEN's commitment to his family, his struggles, and his service encompass what it means to be not just Vice President and a brilliant husband and father but an American.

JOE grew up in a middle-class family who worked hard for everything they had. He was just 29 years old when he ran for a seat in the United States Senate.

Mr. President, you might have been young, but you already saw what divided people in Delaware.

He also knew that people across the State also held the same hopes for themselves and their families, and he believed he could work through those disparities. In an upset victory, he won a seat in the Senate in November of 1972.

Since his swearing in, JOE has worked every day on behalf of families in Delaware and for the entire country, especially the last 8 years.

When JOE lost his son to cancer, he launched a Moonshot for this generation to end cancer as we know it today. He is now working on behalf of every family whoever lost a loved one to cancer to push forward on medical innovations and discoveries. I am so proud JOE's Moonshot is included in the final Cures bill we just voted on this afternoon and even more so that the Senate renamed the provisions to support cancer research in that bill to honor Beau in calling it the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot. We will now use those investments to fight to cure cancer so we can look forward to a world where no family has to go through what the Bidens did and the devastation that millions of other Americans have experienced after being touched by cancer.

Mr. President, back when I was serving with the Presiding Officer, JOE, my friend, in the Senate in 1994, I had the pleasure of working with him to pass the Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, as we know it. It was a landmark piece of legislation that changed the way our country responded to domestic violence and sexual assault. JOE has come out as a strong advocate for ending violence against women through his campaign, “1is2Many,” spreading awareness and working to help reduce dating violence and sexual assaults among students, teens, and

young adults. And his "It's On Us" campaign has been a wake-up call to the epidemic of campus sexual assaults across the country. Women are safer today in America than they were 20 years ago due in part to JOE's fearless leadership on these issues that affect too many in our Nation.

Despite everything he has been through or maybe because of everything he has been through, he gets back up and he fights on and he fights on behalf of every family in our country, and that is heart. That is heart, the way he always wants to make people happy, no matter what the circumstance.

Last time he was in Seattle, he brought a little stuffed animal—a little dog—to give to my granddaughter. Now, she is very shy, but the second he smiled and handed her that little dog, she became his best friend ever, and she keeps it by her side, JOE. That is why he is going to be missed, by his colleagues and by the entire country, because of his humanity. That is the JOE BIDEN I know and I want everyone else to know that too.

It has been an honor to call JOE a fellow Senator, Mr. Vice President, but mostly a great friend.

I want to thank JOE for what he has taught me and all of our colleagues through his service and thank him for his extraordinary and inspiring leadership throughout his life in the best of times and in the worst. JOE—and his aviators—will be sorely missed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. President.

In 1974, a freshman Senator from Delaware named JOE BIDEN was identified as one of Time magazine's "200 Faces for the Future." That prescient prediction anticipated the more than four decades of contributions and accomplishments that followed. JOE BIDEN served six terms in the U.S. Senate and became Vice President of the United States, but he is exactly the same person today as he was when more than 40 years ago he took that first train trip from Wilmington to Washington to be sworn in as a United States Senator. He is everybody's friend—but nobody's fool. And while JOE BIDEN changed Washington, Washington never changed him.

It is an article of faith among those of us who know and love JOE BIDEN that nothing is more important to him than family. It is, therefore, a cruel irony that this good and decent man has faced so many family tragedies during his long and fruitful career in public service.

Although he has been sorely tested by several wrenching losses, Vice President BIDEN's irrepressible spirit has never been broken. He is as optimistic about his country today as he was in 1972, when as a county councilman he defeated a long-serving Senate incumbent and began the journey that

ultimately led him to the second highest office in the land. With his Cancer Moonshot Initiative, JOE BIDEN once again has turned personal tragedy into a public cause that undoubtedly will save lives.

To know JOE BIDEN is to admire him, his warmth, his devotion to friends and family, his commitment to all things Delaware, and his fierce loyalty to his party that somehow never alienated those of us on the other side of the aisle. Perhaps that is due to the many thoughtful gestures the Vice President demonstrates every day.

How well I remember bringing my younger brother to the White House holiday party one year and running into the Vice President just as he was leaving after a long day of work. He instantly stopped and asked if we would like for him to give us a personal tour of the West Wing of the White House. For the next 45 minutes, instead of being driven home, the Vice President of the United States took my brother and me on the best tour of the White House that anyone could ever have. I still remember the shocked look on the face of the marine at the situation room when we arrived there.

Another wonderful memory that I have was of the time JOE BIDEN and I were named Irish Americans of the Year by the American Ireland Fund. I thought it was so telling that both of us brought our family members to the celebratory dinner, and both of us talked about our Irish mothers. Now, I do remember that JOE's speech was considerably better than mine, but mine was much, much shorter.

In a time of almost suffocating partisanship, JOE BIDEN is a breath of bipartisan fresh air. People may disagree with JOE on 1 or 2 or even 10 issues, but nobody finds him disagreeable. It is often said that if you don't love JOE BIDEN, it is time for some serious introspection. You may have a serious problem.

No one can say with certainty what lies ahead for Vice President JOE BIDEN, but this much is certain: He will face the future with unbridled enthusiasm, extraordinary energy, and an unwavering commitment to his family, his friends, and his country.

I thank the Vice President for his outstanding service to our country, but most of all I thank him for his extraordinary friendship to me. I wish the Vice President and his wonderful family all the best.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. President and Vice President.

Well, Mr. President, we all take pleasure in calling you that. Mr. Vice President, Senator, foreign policy guru, the Senator who was tough on crime but a soft touch when it came to compelling human need, a longtime colleague, but most of all, I know you as my friend JOE. My friend JOE. It is

not only that I know you as my friend JOE, the people of Delaware know you as "my friend Joe." The fact is, your colleagues, both present and past, here feel the same way about you and so do the American people.

You have a unique ability to make a visceral connection to people. You actually connect to them, not only on the abstraction of big ideas, of which you were more than capable, but I think your connection was hand to hand, heart to heart. I think when you talk with people, that is why you have this visceral connection.

Sure, you can debate the great ideas, whether it is national security or economic growth, but it is that heart connection you are able to make that I think has been one of your great, great signatures.

We in Maryland know you as a neighbor, the Delmarva gang from Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. We also know you as "Amtrak Joe." I think that is so fitting because not only have you been a champion of Amtrak and ridden the train so faithfully—which has now become the stories of fact and fiction—but also Amtrak JOE is right because, really, in the way you have lived your life, conducted yourself in public service, you have kept America on track and going in the right direction because you knew what your destinations were. I salute you for that. You have done a great job in everything you have undertaken.

I know you because while others just go for the pomp and they love the policy—if I hear one more "I'm going to dive deep in policy," I am going to shake my head.

I am like you. I believe that we do need policies that help people, keep our Nation strong and safe, help our people be able to help themselves, and make sure there is an opportunity structure here. But we are here to be champions of the people. That is what you have been, a champion of the people, and you have been a steady friend.

When I arrived in the Senate, I was the only Democratic woman. I have often said that, though I was all by myself, I was never alone. I was surrounded by the good men in the Senate, and particularly the Democrats reached out their hands and helped me.

Of course, my very good friend Paul Sarbanes, who is here today, was my senior Senator when I came and was my colleague and my champion, but you were right up at the top of the list too. I call the men who were so incredibly helpful to me, Galahads. You help me in every way you can.

In my time in the Senate, when I reached out to you, you were always there. When I reached out to fight for women to be included in the NIH protocols, you were there to help me. When I reached out to fight against the skimpy and spartan money for breast cancer research, you were there to help me. When we organized the women of the Senate, the Democratic women, to fight then-Bush on the privatizing of

Social Security, when we said we shouldn't rely on the bull of political promises while we fear the bear market, you joined right there with us, side by side, shoulder to shoulder. Whether it was equal pay for equal work or so many issues, you were always there when we called upon you. You were always such tremendous help.

I was also there to try to help you. I remember a day in the mid-1990s when I got a call from you. Maybe you remember that, but I remember it. You said you really wanted to stop violence against women. You knew of my social work background, my advocacy for what was then called battered women. You said: Can you help me kind of go over this legislation to make sure that the money goes to people who will help those women and not to people who just want to get grants?

So we worked together. We talked about the need for shelters. We talked about the reform of police, courts, and so on. Then you came up with that fabulous, fabulous idea to have a hotline. So it didn't matter whether you lived in Delaware or in Des Moines or in San Diego, there was always help on the other side of that line.

I was so happy to work with you and to support you as you led that battle through—as only a good man could—to stand for women who were being battered in their own homes and facing danger.

Lately I checked on the statistics on that hotline. JOE BIDEN, since that hotline legislation passed, over 1.5 million have called that hotline. Many of them were in lethal danger—lethal danger. Because of you, JOE BIDEN, there are thousands, if not tens of thousands, of women and children alive today because you had the foresight and the fortitude to create this legislation. That in and of itself would have been enough for a career. But, oh, you did so many other things.

Now we know you are advocating the national Cancer Moonshot, but you have been a champion on finding the cure for cancer for a long time, whether it was for women with breast cancer or others. I am so pleased that in that cloture vote we are going to include \$352 million for that. So on issue after issue, we were there.

I know you have been a great leader, but I also know that behind great men there are also very terrific women. I think we owe a salute to Jill. She is a wonderful woman, a leader in her own right, with a belief in higher education, a belief in working at the community college level so people who had big dreams in their hearts but not a lot of money in their pockets could be able to go on to college. What a champion she has been there and also what a champion for our veterans and for our wounded warriors. Wow, she is just terrific. I know she has been at your side.

There are so many stories I could tell, but I want to wrap up with one. I met your mother. She was spunky. She

was feisty. She was a delight. If there is anything spunkier, feistier, or more delightful than an Irish mother, it is a Polish mother. I wish you could have met mine. Those two would have been kindred spirits.

Do you remember when the Pope came to Baltimore? The Pope was coming to Baltimore, and I told my mother I wanted to greet the Pope in Polish. My mother's response was: Oh, my God.

I grew up in a family that before World War II was bilingual. I was bilingual as a child, but during World War II we stopped speaking all foreign language, so my pronunciation is really awkward. My mother made me practice Polish words, how to say hello to the Pope and how to say goodbye to the Pope.

You and I were at the Baltimore-Washington airport. There goes the Pope in his popemobile. He is heading up, he is getting on "Shepherd Two," and you are saying goodbye: Goodbye Your Holiness.

I say: No, say it in Polish. You have a large Polish community.

I taught you how to say one simple phrase, "sto lat." In the tongue of my ethnic heritage, when you say "sto lat" to someone, you say may they live 100 years.

So, JOE, sto lat.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the presence in the Chamber of five former Senators—Senators Bayh, Harkin, Kaufman, Salazar, and Sarbanes—and to thank many Senators who have asked that their comments be placed in the RECORD.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, given the lateness of the hour, the lengthy and moving remarks that former Senator and now Secretary of State Kerry has provided.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY

STATEMENT ON JOE BIDEN

DECEMBER 7, 2016

Mr. President: Almost four years ago this winter, after almost 29 years serving in the Senate from Massachusetts, and after five times the people of Massachusetts voted to send me to Washington—my Senate colleagues were kind enough to vote to send me away, but not far away, just up the street to the State Department.

So, as a prodigal United States Senator, I am especially grateful to Senator Coons for the privilege to share some thoughts about my colleague of a quarter century in the Senate, and my colleague of the last four years in the Obama Administration—the Vice President of the United States, Joe Biden. That Senator Coons—who sits in the Senate seat which Joe held for almost thirty seven years—organized this remarkable tribute says something about Delaware—a small state where politics is personal, where courtesy is still the currency—but it says much more about the kind of friend and mentor Joe has been to Chris, and to so many of us who have known the Vice President. It is, simply, the right thing to do—but the kind

of thing that doesn't happen enough these days in Washington, in politics, or in the institution which Joe reveres, the U.S. Senate.

I first heard the name "Joe Biden" about 38 years ago. 1972—The first year Joe and I ran for national office. We shared a set of friends and political teammates in progressive politics, friends Joe and I have shared to this day—and they shuttled between Wilmington, Delaware and Lowell, Massachusetts, trying to help both us to victory. In that improbable year, I lost and Joe won—and weeks later tragedy intervened and changed the trajectory of Joe's life not as a Senator, but as a father and a person. I won't forget reading his words back then: "Delaware can find another Senator, but my boys can't find another father." We are all grateful that Joe was persuaded not to give up on public service, but to be sworn in, and to rely—as the Bidens do in their remarkable way—on the closeness of family—of Val and Jimmy in particular—to help him be both a remarkable father and a remarkable public servant.

Twelve years as Joe was elected, I finally arrived in Washington—a junior Senator, second to last in seniority—and one of the first people to pull me aside and offer himself up not as a generational rival, but as a slightly older big brother ready to show me the ropes was the then, senior Senator from Delaware—two years older than me, Senator Joe Biden.

I loved serving with Joe—and I don't just mean we served contemporaneously; we were friends and partners in so many efforts—environment, civil rights, the empowerment of women, foreign policy—and always—always with Joe Biden, whether you agreed or disagreed with him, no matter where you were from in the country or where you stood ideologically, you knew exactly what you could expect: a person of conviction, a person of character, a person who studied the issues and never cut corners—and a Senator in the best tradition whose word was his bond.

For Joe, that's a quality that's deeply personal. The Vice President lives by a very old-fashioned code of loyalty: You always tell the truth, you never forget where you came from, and your word is your bond. And I can't tell you how many times in the Senate when I was listening to Joe negotiate or we were working on something he would say, "I give you my word as a Biden." And you knew you had a very special commitment that would not be broken. That never changed when he became Vice President.

That code also guided his approach as a legislator—not just in how he worked with his colleagues, but to how he approached the issues. I'd been a prosecutor back in the days when some people still argued that violence against women wasn't crime—but it was Joe Biden who was far, far ahead of the curve in the Senate—throughout the 1980's and 1990's—beating the drum on the Judiciary Committee to pass a Violence Against Women Act because there was no crime comparable, as he saw it, in robbing a human being of two things to which everyone is entitled, two words Joe talks about often: dignity and respect.

That is why he was so outspoken about the horrors happening in Bosnia and Kosovo—thousands of miles from our shores—and why as one of those most powerful voices on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he stood up to Slobodan Milosevic, looked him in the eye, and called him a war criminal. That's Joe Biden—on issues of moral clarity, you know exactly where he stands. It is no surprise to me then that long before he served in Iraq, his beloved son Beau volunteered to go to Kosovo and do legal work helping victims find justice, helping victims

reclaim dignity through the judicial system. For the Bidens, this was an article of faith.

Over the years, I had the privilege of traveling with Joe overseas—often with Chuck Hagel and Lindsey Graham. I saw firsthand that when Senator Biden traveled overseas, it wasn't government tourism, whether the Administration was Democratic or Republican. Joe always traveled with a constructive purpose in mind: To learn first-hand about foreign leaders and other perspectives—to forge relationships—and to advance America's cause. In long flights and long meetings headed into places like Afghanistan and Pakistan, again and again I saw someone who leads by listening, who leads by learning, and who speaks with conviction—wherever the place, whatever the language.

Joe's leadership as Vice President has been a terrific asset on domestic issues, and his fluency in the ways of the Senate a special tool called upon at many key moments by Leaders McConnell and Reid. But as Secretary of State I've been particularly grateful for the role he has played on foreign policy. Joe believes to his core that American diplomacy isn't about admiring problems—it's about solving them. When thousands of unaccompanied children showed up on our southwestern border, Joe Biden worked with Congress to provide funding to help Central America's leaders make the difficult reforms and investments required to address the region's multifaceted challenges—because he knew the security and prosperity of Central America are inextricably linked with our own. As the conflict in Ukraine has pressed on, Joe has worked hard—not only to keep the Minsk deal in place, but to encourage and help the government of Ukraine take on corruption and make necessary economic reforms that will help Ukraine flourish and thrive in the years to come. And again and again, in our breakfasts at the Naval Observatory and in phone calls from far flung places, he always encouraged me to keep pressing—to speak up and speak out, and to fight—even inside the Administration—for the policies I believed in, even when he didn't agree. That's Joe Biden.

We still joke about a trip that we took with Chuck Hagel to Afghanistan back in 2008. We went up to a forward operating base up in Kunar province. And our helicopter, on the way back, got caught in a snow squall in the mountains. And our pilot found himself effectively snow blind, and suddenly we were banking and heading down and braced for an emergency landing on this snow-covered road high in the mountains near Bagram Airbase. And Joe Biden turned to Hagel and me and he offered an alternative. He said, "Maybe we could keep the helicopter aloft if the three of us just started to give a speech." But laughter aside, on that frozen mountaintop, as we waited to be rescued, you learn the measure of a person. And throughout that time, what Joe kept coming back to was the gift of family, and the privilege of public service.

America has known Vice President Biden in moments of great triumph and also on occasions of immeasurable pain. We revere the dignity with which he carries himself through all of it. We admire him. We love him. And above all, we thank him—a great Vice President, a "Senate man" still to the core, and someone I know I can call on and count on as a friend long after we both leave office on January 20th. Thank you, Senator—Mr. Vice President—"Joe"—and I know you will carry on in contribution to the cause of country.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor JOE BIDEN, the 47th Vice President of the United States.

After I came to the Senate in 1992—known as "the Year of the Woman"—then-Senator JOE BIDEN invited me to lunch at his office in the Russell Senate Office Building. We sat at small table in his elegant office and discussed the importance of having a woman on the Judiciary Committee, of which he was chairman at the time.

This was in the wake of the Anita Hill hearings, and there were no women on the committee. It was a real honor when JOE BIDEN asked me to join. He then asked Senator Carol Moseley Braun to join, giving the committee two women for the first time.

Serving on the committee with him, I noticed immediately that he had a commanding presence. As I watched him chair the committee, I was impressed by the passion he displayed while working to slow the drug trade, protect women from domestic violence, and help advocate for a ban on assault weapons. These were issues that I, along with millions of other Americans, felt strongly about, and we had a champion in JOE BIDEN.

During discussions about a proposed crime bill in 1993, I told JOE I was working on an assault weapons ban. This was in the wake of a mass shooting in San Francisco that shocked me. I told JOE we had at least 48 votes and I wanted to introduce it as an amendment to the crime bill. He laughed—a big raucous laugh—and said, "Well, you're just a freshman. Wait till the gunners get to you."

He may have had his doubts, but he was a staunch supporter of the amendment, and with the help of President Clinton and CHUCK SCHUMER in the House, we were able to secure bipartisan support and pass the amendment. It was a proud day for me when it was signed into law.

JOE was right about the gunners, though. The gun lobby did come after us, and they continue to oppose commonsense gun laws today.

During that debate and in every fight since then, JOE BIDEN has been staunch, impassioned, and a committed partner.

That crime bill was a monumental piece of legislation. In addition to our assault weapons ban, it put 100,000 more cops on the street, protected children from dangerous predators and included a very important piece of legislation: the Violence Against Women Act.

It has been two decades since JOE introduced the Violence Against Women Act. In that time, domestic violence rates have decreased by 64 percent, conviction rates for abusers increased, and 3.4 million women and men have been helped by the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

Beyond the numbers, JOE changed the debate around domestic violence with enactment of this bill. States and localities changed outdated laws. Victims were given courage to speak out and seek help, and millions of women felt empowered knowing that in Amer-

ica, they had the right to be free from violence and free from fear.

JOE's legacy as chair of the Judiciary is matched by his time leading the Foreign Relations Committee. From atop the committee, he was a forceful advocate for peace and stability around the world. He called for strategic arms limitations with the Soviet Union, helped secure peace in the Balkans, helped bring former Soviet bloc states into NATO, called for U.S. action to end the genocide in Darfur, and spoke out against failed policies in Iraq.

He was also a critic of the CIA's detention and interrogation program and backed our efforts to release the torture report. During heated debate, JOE made the argument simple and easy to understand: America will be stronger by saying the following: "This was a mistake, we should not have done what we've done and we will not do it again."

He was right, and our Nation is stronger for having the courage to admit that.

JOE BIDEN's willingness to speak the truth is one of the many reasons President Obama tapped him to be his running mate. The President knew JOE would discuss every issue with the same frank honesty—whether he was offering counsel in the Oval Office or chatting with someone on the train ride back home.

President Obama relied on his Vice President to oversee the recovery after the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. He was tasked with implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Ready to Work Initiative and to chair the Middle Class Task Force.

JOE BIDEN was the perfect choice for the job. He is the product of his Catholic faith and the values instilled in him growing up in Scranton. Those same values that he carried throughout his career in Delaware and into the Vice Presidency.

He is a tough individual who has faced adversity that would knock a lesser man down; yet through it all, JOE never wavered from his commitment to serving others.

To those of us who have had the pleasure of working with him and to millions of Americans, JOE BIDEN is a good and honest man who simply wants to make the world a better place.

After 44 years in this Chamber, the last 8 as the President of the Senate, JOE can leave knowing he has accomplished just that. The world is a better place thanks to you, and it is grateful for your service, JOE BIDEN.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, for more than 30 years, Vice President JOE BIDEN has held a big place in my heart. Through thick and thin, he trusted me to be his partner in so many fights, and I will be forever grateful to him.

JOE first impressed me after he took a stand against the Reagan administration's support of South Africa when it was still in the depths of apartheid. So when he asked me to help organize

women for his 1988 Presidential campaign, I was all in.

While that race wasn't meant to be, I fell in love with JOE's vision of "reclaiming the idea of America as a community" and his beautiful, persistent optimism and hope—qualities we all still love him for today.

I cherished our time serving in Congress together, and I was so honored that he asked me to carry the Violence against Women Act in the House. JOE was determined to put the spotlight on this quiet epidemic—and he has been doing just that ever since.

I took 5 years, but President Bill Clinton finally signed VAWA into law in 1994. It was one of JOE's many monumental achievements.

By then, I had won election to the U.S. Senate where JOE played a major role in one of my own biggest personal accomplishments: the Dolphin-Safe tuna label law. Well, if I am being honest, it was his then 8-year-old daughter, Ashley, who got him involved.

Schoolchildren across the country were boycotting their tuna fish sandwiches after learning that dolphins could be killed as tuna was caught, and Ashley was begging her father to take action.

I was so proud that JOE chose to partner with me on a bill that required companies that sell dolphin-safe tuna to prove that dolphins were not hurt in the fishing process. Like any good father, JOE wanted to show Ashley that he would come through for her—and he did.

Our bill became law in 1992, and it is estimated that it saves tens of thousands of dolphins every year.

JOE also served as an extraordinary chairman on the Foreign Relations Committee, where I am a member. He was gracious and respectful, listening to every viewpoint, but he also wasn't afraid to speak up and take charge. I thought he was very courageous to point out a better way to solve the civil war in Iraq, and I was so proud to stand with him.

For all of these reasons, and so many more, it is no surprise that President Barack Obama chose JOE BIDEN to serve as his Vice President.

And it is no surprise that JOE will go down as one of the most effective Vice Presidents in history because of his warm, open relationship with President Obama. They have spent a great deal of time together, exchanging thoughts and ideas, and JOE was one of the key advisors who influenced President Obama as he successfully confronted horrific challenges, such as: two wars; the worst recession since the Great Depression; and rising violence in our communities.

Who could ever forget JOE BIDEN's immense respect and gratitude for our men and women in uniform and their families and his determined fight to bring them home safely?

Who could ever forget how he shepherded the Recovery Act through Congress—a near impossible feat in this polarized political climate?

Who could ever forget his long history of fighting for community policing and to strengthen the bonds between police officers and their communities?

No one has fought harder for the things he believes in than JOE BIDEN—no one—and there is nothing that he will not do for the country he so deeply loves.

Love of country is second only to the love JOE has for his beautiful family. When he talks about his incredible wife, children, and grandchildren, you know they are his guiding star.

It is because of this love that we have all come to know and adore JOE, and for that same reason, it is why our hearts broke for him over the profound, unspeakable loss of his son, Beau. All of America mourned with JOE.

He had every right to stay down, but JOE is as resilient as they come. He likes to tell the advice that his father gave him as a child: "Champ, when you get knocked down get up. Get up."

Well, JOE always gets up. He gets up again and again and again.

And we are all so fortunate that he does because, from the U.S. Senate to the Office of the Vice President, JOE has never stopped fighting for the things he believes in—for civil rights, women's rights, worker's rights, economic fairness, a world-class education for our kids, health care for all, and a safe and peaceful world.

JOE has taught me so much, and I am so proud to call him my forever friend.

Many of you know that I love to rewrite song lyrics.

This is what I wrote for JOE:

Joe is a many splendored thing.
He is tough and smart and strong and wise.
Winter, fall and spring.
He's for kids and health and child care.
Our Joe will always be there.
A smile, a glow,
It's not for show, it's true.
Joe worked with us for years and years,
And there is no sleep for our busy Veep.
He has hope not fears.
Whether guy or gal,
Joe is our pal.
And this we know is true,
Joe Biden, colleagues,
All love you.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in honoring you and thanking you for the incredible devotion you have shown to the United States Senate and to express my deep respect for you—respect that I know the people of Michigan share.

You have been a longtime friend to me and to the people of my home State. One thing we have always had in common: our parents were both in the automobile industry. As of course you know, your dad was a car salesman, and my father owned an Oldsmobile dealership.

So we have both known, from the very beginning, how critically important American manufacturing is for so many people in Michigan and across the country.

We worked together, both when you were the Senator from Delaware and

then as the Vice President of the United States, to save the auto industry back in 2008.

You know that the only way we succeed is if we do everything we can to support and grow America's middle class, which you have done your entire career.

There are countless instances over your 40 years of service when you were on the right side of history: when you led the passage of the Violence against Women Act; in your work as the chair of the Judiciary and Foreign Relations Committee; through your wise counsel as Vice President and your ability to work with us to get so much done over the last 8 years; with Dr. Biden, who is here today, for your work supporting Michigan's military families and community colleges; and now in your effort to cure cancer through the Cancer Moonshot.

Early on in your career, you said that the work that we do here allows us to "literally have the chance to shape the future—to put our own stamp on the face and character of America, to bend history just a little bit." I would believe, as every one of my colleagues does, that you have done more than bend the future of America "just a little bit."

You have changed this Nation and you have changed this Senate for the better.

There is a great quote from a poet I know that you admire very much, William Butler Yeats.

It is a piece of advice that he gave out frequently to young writers. It goes: "Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people."

Yeats—like you Mr. President—understood that the best way to reach people is by appealing to their heart, meeting them where they are.

And I think, moving forward, we have to remember that we all have to reach people's hearts and strive to serve as well as you have.

Thank you for your service to this Senate and to the American people.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is fitting that JOE BIDEN ascended from Senator to Vice President—or as the office is known around here, President of the Senate.

JOE was elected to the Senate as a very young man. We have heard JOE talk about how hard it was after losing his wife, Neilia, and baby daughter, Naomi, in an automobile accident, just weeks before he was to be sworn in, to come to Washington and assume his duties. He credits his older colleagues like Mike Mansfield, Ted Kennedy, Danny Inouye, Hubert Humphrey, Fritz Hollings, and Rhode Island's Claiborne Pell, who opened his Washington home to the young Senator, with convincing him to stick it out, just for a few months.

Well, he did more than stick it out. He dove in. The Senate saved his life, he has said, in that time of grief. And in return, he gave his life to the Senate, serving the people of Delaware for more than three decades.

JOE BIDEN presided over Supreme Court nomination hearings as chairman of the Judiciary Committee. He shepherded the assault weapons ban and the Violence Against Women Act. He served also as the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, facing down dictators and championing nuclear nonproliferation.

He is, of course, recognized in Senate lore as a particularly strong speaker and debater. From his familiar perch in the back row of the Chamber, JOE would hold forth on the merits of legislative proposals and the positions of his colleagues. If the Chamber was empty of Senators, he would even turn and deliver his speeches to the captive audience in the staff gallery behind him.

But JOE can always be counted on for telling it like it is. Not long ago, he was in my home State of Rhode Island to tout needed infrastructure projects. Now, Rhode Island has one of the highest rates of structurally deficient bridges in the Nation, and my senior Senator, JACK REED, and I have worked hard to bring Federal resources to bear in addressing that need. But JOE put it no uncertain terms. Standing under the East Shore Expressway Bridge on Warren Avenue in East Providence, the Vice President cried, "For 10 years you've had Lincoln logs holding the damn thing up! No, I mean go look at it. The press went and looked at it. If everybody in Rhode Island watched the news tonight and saw that, they'd try to go around the damn bridge!"

Whatever his style or accomplishments, JOE will always pin his success in the Senate on the personal relationships he forged so deeply and so sincerely, with ideological allies and strange bedfellows alike. "Every good thing I have seen happen here, every bold step taken in the 36-plus years I have been here, came not from the application of pressure by interest groups, but through the maturation of personal relationships," he said in his 2009 farewell speech. "Pressure groups can and are strong and important advocates. But they're not often vehicles for compromise. A personal relationship is what allows you to go after someone hammer and tong on one issue and still find common ground on the next."

That is why JOE BIDEN was uniquely well suited for the one job in this country with one constitutional foot in the executive branch and the other in the legislative. He was at the center of a number of high-stakes compromises between the White House, Congress, and the two parties. And every once in a while, he still got to vote.

"Except for the title 'father,'" he said, "there is no title, including 'vice president,' that I am more proud to wear than that of United States senator." JOE BIDEN is a great father to Hunter and Ashley, and to Beau, whose passing last year was felt by the entire Senate family. He served honorably as Vice President. But he will always be the pride of the Senate.

I thank him for his faithful service and for his enduring example. And I wish him and Jill great happiness in the adventures to come.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Vice President JOE BIDEN, a man who has dedicated his life to serving our country, working across the aisle whenever he can, and always doing his best to get things done for the American people.

I am proud to have known and admired JOE a long time. I first met JOE toward the end of his first campaign for the Senate, in the fall of 1972. My father, Stewart Udall, had been called to Delaware to help the young Democratic candidate with environmental issues. I tagged along with my dad and spent a day on the campaign trail with a man who would come to spend 36 distinguished years in the Senate and become our 47th Vice President.

The following summer, I worked as a staffer in his Senate office—writing constituent letters, researching policy issues, preparing press materials. That was my first job in the Senate.

In so many ways, JOE Biden is the same person now as then—caring, passionate, energetic, tenacious, and ready and able to get things done.

JOE gave me my first Senate job, and this January—44 years later—he swore me in for the 114th Congress.

I note that Senators from across our country—from both parties—have lined up to speak to JOE's character and accomplishments. We respect him as a colleague, and we love him for his passion and commitment to public service.

JOE has never forgotten his blue collar roots. He has never forgotten our country's working class. JOE has fought all his life to make sure the working class gets a fair shake. He sounded the clarion call in the last months and weeks of the Presidential campaign—that we not forget working families and, more broadly, America's middle class.

In his words, "The middle class is not a number; it's a value set. It's being able to own your house and not have to rent it; it's being able to send your kid to the local park and know they'll come home safely. It's about being able to send your kid to the local high school and if they do well they can get to college, and if they get to college, you can figure out how to [pay to] get them there, and when your mom or dad passes away, you can take care of the other who is in need and hope your kids never have to take care of you. That's JOE BIDEN's definition of the middle class, and the middle class has been clobbered."

JOE championing the working and middle class helps my State of New Mexico, helps all of our States.

His policy expertise is broad and deep but maybe in no area as much as foreign policy. He has spent decades working on international matters—as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as the committee's chair or ranking member, as President

Obama's foreign relations troubleshooter.

From my service on the Foreign Relations Committee, I have a keen appreciation for the complexity of foreign policy matters in today's world.

JOE's foreign policy is at once pragmatic and sophisticated. He has stalwartly promoted peace and nonproliferation. But he understands the need for military force when national interests are at stake, diplomacy is not an option, and such action will bear intended results.

JOE recently summed up what can be called the Biden Doctrine in Foreign Affairs. He identifies the broad themes of Obama foreign policy strategy and advises the next administration. The essay should be required reading for anyone serious about foreign policy, and I hope the new administration takes his advice to heart.

While JOE's legislative accomplishments are too many to list, I would like to underscore one achievement that has made a difference in my home State of New Mexico—The Violence Against Women Act.

As chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, JOE drafted VAWA and led the charge for enactment. Passed in 1994, VAWA reordered how the Federal criminal justice system handled rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence cases. VAWA gave victims needed protections and strengthened prosecutors' tools.

I was attorney general of New Mexico in 1994. In the wake of VAWA's passage, I formed the Violence Against Women Task Force. We got strengthened antistalking laws passed in the New Mexico Legislature in 1997.

While VAWA was easily reauthorized and strengthened during the 2000s, reauthorization became difficult in 2012. As Vice President, JOE was instrumental in breaking impasses.

VAWA represented a sea change for how our society addresses violent crime against women.

The law was reauthorized and strengthened in 2013, and now extends protections to gay and transgender persons, immigrant women, and on-reservation Native Americans.

Like JOE, I am a husband and father of a daughter. I am proud to have voted in favor of reauthorization.

We all know that JOE has faced deep, personal tragedies. But he has confronted tragedy with courage and love for his family and with an unimaginable determination to keep working for the American people—turning his own losses into ways to help others.

JOE and his equally capable, determined, and indefatigable wife Jill have brought new energy and urgency to the fight to cure cancer. The Cancer Moonshot has already had many successes. JOE turned the premature death of his son into actions to help others with cancer.

This week, the Senate that JOE gave so much to gave something back, sending the 21st Century Cures Act to

President Obama for signature. The \$1.8 billion cancer initiatives in that bill are the direct result of Vice President BIDEN's Cancer Moonshot initiative.

It is fitting that we named the cancer initiatives in the Cures Act after Beau Biden.

JOE BIDEN leaves the Vice Presidency, but he will never leave the fight for all Americans—Black, Brown, White, poor, working class, middle class, gay, straight, Muslim, Christian—everyone—fighting for what is right, fighting to make sure we all have a fair shot.

JOE's heart is as big as they come. I honor his decades of work, commitment, and accomplishments, and I look forward to JOE continuing being JOE—the same guy I met in 1972—working hard every day to make a difference in the lives of all Americans.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the contributions and the long and colorful career of Vice President JOE BIDEN—the pride of Scranton, PA—and of Wilmington, DE—and the pride of the entire United States.

JOE BIDEN lived, learned, and grew up among hard-working Americans in the 1950s and 1960s, when everything in America seemed possible—and it was. Remarkably, this gifted orator grew up with a crippling stutter—a challenge which he overcame through determination and perseverance. He displayed that same uncommon strength after he lost his wife and daughter in a horrific car accident just weeks after being first elected to the United States Senate.

Vice President BIDEN considered giving up his seat to tend to his injured children. It is one of this country's great fortunes that JOE BIDEN decided against that. Scarred by the tragedy and by a close brush with death himself and more recently by the loss of his son Beau, the Vice President has shown us the power of and the comfort derived from a deep personal faith.

When he was first elected to the United States Senate in 1972, he was only 29 years old. And in a Senate career spanning 36 years, Senator BIDEN left behind a legacy as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Perhaps his greatest achievement was his tireless advocacy for civil rights, especially the protection of women and children from domestic violence. The passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 is an enduring Biden legacy which we will continue to build upon for years to come.

And now, even as he is about to retire from political life, Vice President BIDEN has taken on a new cause: to find a cure for the disease which has claimed too many millions of Americans, including his beloved son, Beau. The Cancer Moonshot has refocused and reinvigorated our Nation's efforts to eradicate this devastating disease, and I was proud to support renaming the legislation to honor Beau Biden.

Vice President BIDEN is as honest and authentic a person as you will find, providing a welcome dose of humanity and authenticity to the business of governing. And he has served with great honor and humility.

I recall a dinner the Vice President attended at my home where, before he greeted a single guest, he made sure to spend time with my children—greeting them and engaging them in a real conversation. They have never forgotten that.

And, as the meal was ending, the Vice President said he wanted to hear from each of our guests. Now, this may come as no surprise to those of you who know JOE BIDEN, but he actually spoke at some considerable length about how important he thought it was to hear from everybody who was there. Two and a half hours into a dinner scheduled to last just 90 minutes, I think one guest got to ask the Vice President a question.

I know Vice President BIDEN and his exceptional partner, Jill, will continue to be engaged in the life of our Nation, so I will simply thank him today for four decades of public service—and pledge my continued respect for his many contributions to this great Nation which he loves so completely.

Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I want to join in honoring Vice President BIDEN's lifetime of service and sacrifice to our country.

Throughout his career, Vice President BIDEN has carried out his work with a sense of humility, integrity, and authenticity that often seems missing in today's politics.

He served as either chairman or ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee for 17 years. In this capacity, he crafted the Violence Against Women Act, which provided critical new protections to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The landmark bill also supported local law enforcement to help increase prosecutions and convictions of abusers. He has continued this legacy by serving as the White House Adviser on Violence Against Women.

Most recently, he led the White House's efforts on the Cancer Moonshot initiative, which seeks to hasten our advances in cancer research, prevention, and treatment. Earlier today, the Senate passed a bill to help make the Cancer Moonshot initiative a reality, which is a further testament to the Vice President's leadership and character.

The Vice President's involvement in the Cancer Moonshot initiative was born out of the death of his son, Beau, who lost his battle with brain cancer last year. The Vice President also grappled with tragedy at a young age when his first wife and his 13-month-old daughter were killed in a car accident. The poise, dignity, and humility that the Vice President has been able to maintain in the face of these tragedies speaks to his strength and his char-

acter. Through all this, he has continued to serve the American people with the utmost integrity and authenticity, which have undoubtedly contributed to his successful career in public service.

The Vice President has also consistently advocated for the leadership role the United States plays in the world. Over the years, Vice President BIDEN has lent his diplomatic hand to U.S. engagement in development and security in places like Eastern Europe and the Northern Triangle countries of Central America. He has worked tirelessly to strengthen our partnerships across the globe, in places like Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, in an effort to further U.S. interests and the values upon which our Nation has thrived.

When he was in Denver this past September to speak at the Korbel School, the Vice President warned against "turning inward." JOE has no capacity to turn inward in any walk of life. His career is characterized by reaching outward to the American people and to the world, working to listen, collaborate, heal, and serve. We can all learn a lot from that open and inclusive approach.

We are grateful for the Vice President's leadership and example. I thank him and his incredible family for their service to our Nation.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to an incredible leader, public servant, mentor, and friend.

It seems impossible to place a period on the public service career of JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN, Jr.

So perhaps this is just an ellipsis.

For 36 years, JOE BIDEN was a towering presence in this body. As a member, ranking member, and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, he dove headfirst into the most challenging issues in a volatile world, shaping a generation of U.S. foreign policy. He tackled arms control issues, stood up directly to Slobodan Milosevic, fought against apartheid in South Africa, and strongly advocated for NATO bombing of Serbia in the 1990s. He once called his contribution to ending the Yugoslav wars one of the "proudest moments" of his political career. For years, he worked to shape our policy in Iraq and the Middle East. He did so not just from his Washington office, but through regular visits to warzones, where he met face to face with military leaders and enlisted men and women, alike. This is JOE BIDEN's legacy.

As a member and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator BIDEN spearheaded the Federal assault weapons ban, presided over Supreme Court confirmations, and—in perhaps his most significant legislative triumph—authored the Violence Against Women Act.

For generations, violence against women was a private matter—a tragedy suffered over and over by women with no recourse against abusive partners. VAWA brought this scourge out

of the shadows and into the open, affirming that domestic violence survivors would NOT also be victimized by the system that was supposed to protect them. Because of VAWA, which Senator BIDEN helped reauthorize three times, 3.4 million women and men have called the National Domestic Violence Hotline and gotten the support they need. From 1994, when VAWA became law, until 2010, the rate of domestic violence in the United States has fallen by 64 percent. These are real accomplishments and real people—not just statistics. This is JOE BIDEN's legacy.

And, as everyone knows, he did it all commuting daily from and to his beloved Delaware.

Then he got a job that included accommodation in Washington, DC.

JOE BIDEN has transformed the job of Vice President. A key liaison to Congress because of his years of relationships on the Hill, JOE BIDEN stood shoulder to shoulder with President Obama and brought our economy back from the brink. Vice President BIDEN was tasked with implementing and overseeing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which laid the foundation for a sustainable economic future we are experiencing today.

He also tackled longer term economic challenges, traveling the country in support of American manufacturing jobs and working tirelessly to rein in the exorbitant cost of college and spiraling student loan debt. JOE BIDEN believes in his bones that all Americans deserve a fair shot.

That is why he was an early advocate for marriage equality. He accelerated change, forcing a conversation that, at its heart, was about love and the simple premise of all men and women being equal.

His belief in a fair shot for all is why Vice President BIDEN devoted incredible energy after the Sandy Hook shooting to sparing other families the heartbreak felt by too many in Newtown. Some of the most challenging days of the Obama administration were days of mass shootings.

Aurora, San Bernardino, Orlando, Fort Hood, Charleston, Tucson, and of course Newtown—to anyone who has been active in the push for common-sense gun safety measures—as I have—the Vice President's steady hand, commitment, and leadership in this space have been obvious. Along with the President, he has comforted families, devoted countless hours to healing, and contributed energy and ideas to a years-long push that will eventually affect real change and keep the most lethal weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous people.

And that will be JOE BIDEN's legacy.

Vice President JOE BIDEN was taught early on by his parents that hard work mattered, that how you treat others matters, and above all else that family matters most. Throughout his career, he had a rule in his office: if one of his children, his wife Jill, or a sibling called, staff was to pull him out of a

meeting so he could take the call. The same rule extended to staff. He never wanted to hear that someone had stayed at work instead of making it to a graduation, Little League game, or school play.

That, laid bare, is JOE BIDEN. He came to Washington on the shoulders of his family, which fanned out across Delaware and knocked on doors until there were no more doors to knock. When tragedy struck—between his improbable election victory and his swearing in—and he suffered the unimaginable loss of his wife and infant daughter, his family pulled him closer. He stayed by the hospital beds of his two sons, Beau and Hunter, and nursed them back to health, questioning all along whether he would ever serve in the Senate.

But this body—this Senate—pulled him closer, too. Senators Inouye, Mansfield, Humphrey, Hollings, and Kennedy all pleaded with him to give the Senate a chance: “Just six months, JOE. Just stay six months.”

He stayed 36 years. And he learned lessons about character and motives—lessons we are all still learning today. He learned from Mike Mansfield never to question another man's motive—question his judgment but never his motive. It was a lesson that bridged divides that too often keep us apart. The lesson made for lasting friendships with Jesse Helms and Strom Thurmond—whose eulogy he delivered.

JOE BIDEN arrived in the Senate after a 1972 campaign heavy on civil rights. Years later, the centerpiece in his Senate office was a large table that had belonged to Senator John Stennis, around which Senator Richard Russell and Southern segregationists had planned the demise of the civil rights movement. In 2009, JOE BIDEN became Vice President to our first African-American President.

The arc of the moral universe is long, but it does indeed bend toward justice.

We have not seen the end of JOE BIDEN. Just this week, he presided over this body as we took an important step toward realizing the dream of the Cancer Moonshot—an ambitious project to end cancer as we know it.

It is another effort that has profound personal meaning to the Vice President, who lost his son Beau to this horrible disease. It is also a place where JOE BIDEN's work will have lasting, indelible effect on Americans—indeed all of humanity—if he is successful.

And that is JOE BIDEN's legacy.

He brought people together. He tackled the impossible. He overcame obstacles. He bridged divides. Tireless and fierce, JOE BIDEN put family and country first. We cannot ask for more than that.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues to pay tribute to Vice President JOE BIDEN.

JOE has made countless contributions to our country throughout his more than 40 years in public service and six terms in the U.S. Senate.

Whether it was passing the Violence Against Women Act, leading the congressional opposition to apartheid South Africa, or advocating for Amtrak, JOE honored the Senate with his service.

This year, after the loss of his beloved son Beau, JOE harnessed his grief to spearhead a new Cancer Moonshot initiative to accelerate finding cures for cancer.

This past Monday night, with JOE presiding, we named this initiative in memory of Beau.

After Monday's vote, JOE said that it made him realize all of the support he has had since Beau's passing.

In the face of his own loss, JOE has supported countless other families in similar situations.

I will remember JOE for this incredible empathy.

This year we lost our colleague and friend Congressman Mark Takai of Hawaii.

I affectionately called Mark my younger brother, and his passing was a shock to many of us.

JOE joined us to honor Mark at a memorial service here in the Capitol.

Reflecting on his own life, JOE spoke directly to Mark's wife, Sami, and his children, Matthew and Kaila:

I promise you that the day will come when Mark's memory brings a smile to your lips before it brings a tear to your eye.

My prayer for you and your family is that they come sooner rather than later. But I promise you. I promise you it will come.

Like so many times in his life, JOE's words spoke to our hearts.

From his own experience, he comforted the Takais and so many of us who knew Mark.

That is who JOE is—a man of empathy and soul, who always had a kind word, and who will leave a legacy of commitment to doing the right thing, and a legacy of hope.

JOE, you will be missed.

Mahalo for your service.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I would like to join with my colleagues to honor Vice President JOSEPH R. BIDEN.

Though I did not have the privilege to serve with Vice President BIDEN while he was a Member of the Senate, I have long admired JOE and his sincere commitment to the people of this country and especially to those in his beloved home State of Delaware.

The details of JOE's early years are well known to this body and to the Nation, but because they are so central to his character, they bear repeating. After an upset win of a U.S. Senate seat at just 29 years old, JOE experienced a tragedy that most of us cannot even begin to fathom—the death of his wife, Neilia, and his young daughter, Naomi, in a car accident just weeks before he was set to take office. A now-iconic photograph shows a young JOE being sworn into office at his sons' hospital bedside.

A tragedy of that magnitude, so early in JOE's career, would have been

reason for most to put on hold—or even end—a promising future in public service. Indeed, no one would have faulted JOE had he decided that the demands of the work he was set to undertake were not worth pursuing after the unimaginable loss he had just experienced. But, from the depths of his sorrow, JOE summoned the courage to press forward, committing himself to his two sons and to his work fighting for Delaware in the U.S. Senate. Committed to caring for his young family in the wake of such loss, JOE would take the train from Wilmington to Washington each day the Senate was in session.

During his 36 years as a member of this body, JOE distinguished himself as a thoughtful, principled leader on a number of critical issues. JOE's leadership on the Senate Judiciary Committee put him at the center of some of the most consequential debates in recent years, from passage of the 1994 Crime Law to the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act. In his role on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, JOE garnered the respect of lawmakers on both sides of the aisle as he helped to shape U.S. foreign policy. His leadership in both of these areas, as well as the respect of his colleagues in Congress, made JOE a natural pick to join then-Senator Obama as his running mate in 2008.

As Vice President, JOE has been a trusted adviser to President Obama and has been tasked with overseeing significant initiatives within the administration. From his work on the economic stimulus package in 2009 to his continued leadership in the fight against sexual assault and domestic violence, JOE has brought to the White House his characteristic dedication and charisma. It has been a pleasure to observe the real friendship that the Vice President has forged with President Obama, one grounded in mutual respect and admiration for one another.

We saw again last year JOE's strength in the face of adversity when cancer claimed the life of his son, Beau. Like his father, Beau Biden was a gifted communicator, and the Nation mourned alongside JOE at the news of his passing. In the aftermath of Beau's death, JOE accepted the President's charge to lead the Cancer Moonshot initiative to accelerate cancer research—yet another shining example of JOE channeling his experience with loss into advancement for the public good. It is a fitting testament to JOE's leadership that the cancer provisions in the bill currently under consideration in the Senate, the 21st Century Cures Act, were renamed in honor of Beau. I know of few people who have endured the magnitude of loss that JOE has over the course of his life, and the fact that he carries on every day with a full heart and renewed dedication to fighting for the American people is an inspiration.

Beyond his accomplishments—which are many—JOE is perhaps best known for his good humor and genuine ability to connect with people. In a city asso-

ciated more with political rancor than authenticity, JOE has long been a breath of fresh air, an homage to a more amicable past. His ability to get things done while making steadfast friends on both sides of the aisle is a model for all of us and an inspiration to me.

I wish JOE and his wife, Jill, nothing but the best as they move onto their next adventure. I know in times of trial, I will look to JOE's leadership and example for the wisdom to make the right decision.

Mr. Vice President, on behalf of the people of Maine, I thank you for your service to our country.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, today I join my colleagues in celebrating the many contributions of Vice President JOE BIDEN, a man who has spent his career fighting for working families.

For more than four decades, Vice President BIDEN has tirelessly served the people of Delaware and the United States. As many of my colleagues have already noted, he has been on the frontlines of some of our Nation's toughest battles—from steering the Foreign Relations and Judiciary Committees, to introducing the Violence Against Women Act and championing efforts to reduce gun violence in our communities. He takes on every fight with restless energy and relentless optimism.

I first met then-Senator BIDEN back in the 1990s when I was a law professor with no experience in the ways of Washington. We tangled over an issue, each of us laying into the fight with determination. Senator BIDEN won, and I lost. Years later, when I next saw him, he held out his arms and shouted from halfway across the room, "Professor! Come here and give me a hug!"

He had not forgotten our earlier battle, but he made it clear that he continued to think and rethink issues about working families and that, even when we disagreed, we could respect—and even like—each other. And when I was later sworn into the United States Senate, I thought about the example he set to fight hard, but to treat each other with respect.

The Vice President has faced down hardship with exceptional grace and courage, and he continues to wake up every day with a steadfast commitment to ensuring that the voices of ordinary Americans are heard here in Washington. And for me personally, he has provided encouragement, wisdom, and good counsel, time and again—and for that, I am truly grateful.

So, Vice President BIDEN: those of us here in the Senate are fortunate to have had the opportunity to work alongside you. And I know I speak for millions of Americans when I say that we all are enormously grateful for your many years of service to this country. Thank you, and I wish you the very best as you begin the next chapter of your life and career.

Mr. COONS. We have five Senators remaining who have asked to speak

briefly: Senator ALEXANDER, Senator CARDIN, Senator CASEY, and Senator KAINE. My senior Senator, TOM CARPER of Delaware, will conclude this session today.

I yield the floor to the Senator from Tennessee.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, knowing there is a reception coming, I will try to set a good example. After hearing a speech, my late friend Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," said: May I make a suggestion?

I said: Well, yes.

He said: If, when you make a speech, you would say "Instead of making a speech, let me tell you a story," someone might actually listen to what you have to say.

I have always remembered that, so let me tell one short story about a Vice President who knows how to get things done.

Nearly 2 years ago, you and President Obama invited Senator CORKER and me to go with you to Knoxville when the President announced his community college program. Before that, we had lunch privately, and we talked about many things, but the President talked about his interest in precision medicine.

I said: Mr. President, we are working on something we call 21st Century Cures. Why don't we fold that into your precision medicine interest, and we will do it together.

At the State of the Union address a year later, the President talked about the Cancer Moonshot and announced Vice President JOE BIDEN would be in charge of that. So I talked to you and said: Well, we will just fold that in as well.

It wasn't moving along as fast as I would like because, as you know and as most people here know, it is full of difficult issues—FDA, safety, moving things through, drug companies' incentives, and then the funding issue on both sides of the aisle.

So I called you and I said: JOE, we are not moving as we should.

You said: Well, let me see what I can do.

And you held a meeting of the Democrats and Republicans in the House—Senator MURRAY and me—and you moved us along pretty well and off we would go. You didn't take credit for that; nobody knew much about it. You were the key to that.

Then it got stuck again. So I called you again. I said: JOE, I have the precision medicine, I have the Cancer Moonshot, we have the BRAIN Initiative, we have the opioids money, but I can't get a response. I feel like the butler standing with a silver platter outside the Oval Office, and no one will take the order.

You said: If you want to feel like a butler, try being Vice President.

Well, the fact was, you went to work again. The President called; he went to work. Speaker RYAN went to work,

Senator MCCONNELL went to work, and today that legislation on which you worked so hard passed the Senate with 94 votes. That is an example of a man who understands the issues, who knows how to get things done, and who has the respect of everyone in this body.

This is Pearl Harbor Day. Pearl Harbor Day reminds us of the greatest generation of men and women who cared about the country, didn't care about the credit, resolved their differences, and realized that diversity is important but turning that diversity into one America is even more important. You are not of that generation, but you show the same spirit as that generation did. Your work on 21st Century Cures and the fact that the Cancer Moonshot section is not only something that is your initiative—is named for your son—is important not just to you but to all of us.

You are a friend of every single one of us. We honor you today. We are delighted you came down to let us tell a few stories about your effectiveness as Vice President of the United States.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I also wish to join in thanking you for your incredible service. Senator MIKULSKI talked about a lot of things you have done. The two of us represent the State of Maryland. Other than the two of us, there is no other Senator who has spent more time in Maryland than the Vice President.

Admittedly, most of that time was spent on an Amtrak train, but we consider you to be a resident of Maryland. We have tried to find a way to tax you, but we will let you get by. We very much appreciate your interest in our entire region and in our entire country.

When I was elected to the Senate in 2007, I talked to Senator Sarbanes—the person whom I was replacing in the Senate—about committee assignments, and we talked about the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He said: Get on the committee. JOE BIDEN is an incredible leader. Any time you can spend with him is going to be time well spent.

I talked to Senator MIKULSKI, and she told me the same thing. I was honored to be able to serve on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and saw firsthand your extraordinary leadership on behalf of our country. But bringing us together in that committee, you didn't know who the Democrats and who the Republicans were. We worked together in a unit in the best interests of our country. That really was a model for all of us in the service of the Senate and service on behalf of our people.

A little over 8 years later, I became a ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and we had some extremely challenging issues that could have divided us. You helped me through that period. I really wish to thank you for that. Your extraordinary leadership in helping us resolve some

very difficult issues, your openness, your willingness to listen, and your ability to find a way to go forward were incredibly helpful. I think it allowed the Senate to do the right thing on that issue—as well as the oversight. I thank you very much.

That wasn't your only opportunity to help us resolve issues. You have heard Members talk about the Violence Against Women Act and how important that was. The Cancer Moonshot is going to be incredibly valuable. Each one of our families has been affected by cancer. Through your efforts, we know we are going to find the answer to this dread disease. You have done this in so many different areas, law enforcement—the list goes on and on.

Last year I was in Central America. I think there you could easily run for office and have no problems at all. They know what you have done to give them a hope, to give them a future. You take an interest in an area and find a way to be helpful that I think has made our country stronger. You have given hope to people all over the world.

You have a love for people. You hear that. You hear that often. It was Will Rogers who famously said he never met a man he didn't like. That is true of JOE BIDEN. It is incredible.

I remember when I was being sworn in, in the ceremony in the Old Senate Chamber, you not only talked to Members of the Senate, you talked to every member of our families. I don't know if you had the best staff work or not, but you knew every Member's family. To this day my grandchildren talk about the conversation they had with you during that swearing-in ceremony. You really care about people, and that really shows. This is a family here, and you have truly shown that to us. Myrna and I look at you and Jill as people who are part of our family.

I think you are, perhaps, the most ebullient politician in America. Horrific family tragedies and life-threatening cranial aneurysms severely tested, but ultimately didn't diminish, your faith in God or your love for the “retail” aspect of politics—meeting and greeting people, making those human connections.

Mr. President, for those who may not know your story, I would like to tell them part of it. JOE BIDEN was born in Scranton and raised there before his parents moved the family to Delaware. He was the first member of his family to attend college. He earned his B.A. from the University of Delaware and then went to law school at Syracuse University, during which time he married his college sweetheart, Neilia Hunter. They had three children—two sons and a daughter.

In 1972, just four years after JOE graduated from law school and when he was just 29 years old—he ran a bare bones, longshot campaign for the U.S. Senate against the incumbent, Caleb “Cale” Boggs, who had previously been Delaware's Governor and had served three terms in the U.S. House of Rep-

resentatives. JOE's sister Valerie ran the campaign; most of the other “staff” were other family members. He demonstrated his extraordinary ability to connect with voters and won the election by 3,162 votes and became the sixth-youngest Senator in U.S. history.

Just a few weeks after the election, JOE's wife and their infant daughter Naomi were killed in a traffic accident; their two young sons, Hunter and Beau, were seriously injured. JOE was sworn in to the U.S. Senate next to his sons' hospital beds and steadfastly began commuting to Washington from Wilmington every day by train, a practice he maintained throughout his career in the Senate.

In 1977, Vice President BIDEN married Jill Jacobs. Jill has a Ph.D. in education and is a lifelong educator. Together, JOE and Jill had daughter, Ashley, who is a social worker.

JOE's affinity for the people of Delaware was reciprocal: he was re-elected to the Senate six times, including in 2008 when he was also elected Vice President.

In February of 1988, JOE was admitted to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He had an intracranial aneurysm that had begun leaking. The situation was dire, a priest had actually administered last rites at the hospital. The surgery was successful but he suffered a pulmonary embolism and had to undergo another operation, which was successful, in May 1988. Two brain operations might slow down most people, but not JOE. Two years after he nearly died, he won re-election to a fourth Senate term.

JOE's Senate career wasn't just long; it was distinguished. He became the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee in 1981. Three years later, he helped to steer the Comprehensive Crime Control Act to passage. It was the first of many major legislative accomplishments which included the Violent Crime Control & Law Enforcement Act of 1994. That bill contained the assault weapon ban and the Violence Against Women Act, and it established the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program.

JOE's accomplishments on the domestic policy side are impressive, but he also became a foreign policy expert. When Congress refused to ratify the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II Treaty Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and President Jimmy Carter signed in 1979, JOE met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. He was able to secure changes to the Treaty to overcome the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's objections. He has played a pivotal role in shaping U.S. foreign policy ever since. I was honored to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee for the last 2 years JOE served as Chairman. I have been honored to work with him in his current capacity as Vice President to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, to include the former Warsaw Pact

countries of Eastern and Central Europe and support a sovereign, democratic Ukraine. He is a champion of Israel and has been one of the principal architects of administration's rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. He has developed deep relationships with the world leaders by excelling at face-to-face diplomacy.

Mr. President, we were all devastated when your beloved son Beau lost his battle with brain cancer last year. Beau was just 46. It was a poignant moment on Monday when you were in the Chair, presiding over the Senate as we voted to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House message to accompany H.R. 34, the 21st Century Cures Act. The bill contains provisions to implement the administration's "Cancer Moonshot"—yet another one of your sparking accomplishments. I want to commend Senator MCCONNELL and the majority for renaming that title of the bill the "Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot and National Institutes of Health (NIH) Innovation Projects". I know it means a lot to you and your family.

I have made my lifetime serving in public life. You have made that profession an honorable profession through the manner in which you have conducted yourself, your integrity, who you are, and the way that you bring people together. I am proud to have served with you in this body.

Mr. President, you have been an extraordinary public servant for nearly half a century. You have also been a dedicated family man and a good friend. I said at the beginning of my remarks that you never met a man you didn't like. I don't think anyone who has ever met you didn't like you, too.

Congratulations.

THE VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, it is an honor to be here today. I was thinking about what I would say today and making it as brief and as personal as I could. I have to say that on a day like today it is difficult. We all have the privilege of being able to go to this floor on a regular basis to talk about issues, to talk about our country, and to talk about the world, but we also have one of the great privileges to talk about those with whom we have served and for whom we have great respect.

This is one of those moments. It is of great significance for me that I am able to stand on the floor of the Senate as a native of and as a resident of the city of Scranton in Lackawanna County to talk about a son of Scranton.

I know this is a pretty big day for Delaware—Delaware's No. 1 citizen and on this historic day for Delaware. But I have to say I am so grateful to be able to say on behalf of the people of Scranton and Lackawanna County in Northeastern Pennsylvania how proud we are today to be able to pay tribute to Vice President JOE BIDEN.

There is so much to say about that history, so much to say about what it

means to be able to stand on the floor and talk about his record, his life, his achievements, but mostly to talk about who he is.

When I consider what he has contributed to our country, to his State, and to the world, it is difficult to encapsulate it. I tried to jot down a few notes to remind myself of how best to encapsulate that life.

I guess I would start with the word "integrity." It may be a word that we take for granted, but it is a word that has to be part of the life of a public official. I would say in the case of JOE BIDEN, he has the kind of integrity that is uncommon—uncommon not because it is a rare trait but uncommon because it is so much a part of his whole life. He was a public official with integrity, and we hope he is again when he might consider public office again. But he is also a person of great integrity when it comes to the fights he has had to wage on behalf of people without power, the work he has had to do as a public official infused with that kind of integrity and, at the same time, the same kind of integrity we expect from a family member and a friend. So I would start with that word.

Certainly the word "compassion" comes to mind. Every one of us can tell a story. I was hearing stories just yesterday from a colleague about a phone call the Vice President made over the last couple of years to someone who was grieving, who was in the depths of the darkness of grief, and the phone call he made to that person.

I have heard stories over the years about not just phone calls but visits with people, stopping into a funeral home for a long lost friend who had lost a loved one, letters he has written. I know a personal friend who lost his wife and his sons had lost their mom and what the Vice President wrote to them just this summer. Over and over again, he has demonstrated that kind of compassion.

I can remember my own case in a very personal way. It was only an election loss. I ran for Governor of Pennsylvania in a primary. As many of my colleagues know, primaries are particularly difficult. I lost badly. No one called on Wednesday after Tuesday. One reporter showed up at my door, and I opened the door and I really couldn't say much to this reporter, but I was grateful she was there. But I got one phone call on Wednesday—maybe a couple of family members; I come from a family of eight. I think my wife was talking to me, but other than that, the only person who called me was JOE BIDEN. He made some kind of grand prediction—I thought he was just being nice—that I would somehow come back. But he was right. And he made me feel much better that day. He may not remember it, but I will remember that for the rest of my life.

I think certainly when we think about the Vice President, we could center on another one word: "justice"—an abiding and enduring commitment to

justice. His whole public life could be summarized in that word and the commitment he has had to justice. We could quote from the Bible: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied." I am not sure JOE BIDEN has ever been satisfied yet with justice. He is always pursuing it, always trying to bring justice to a problem or to a situation or to the life of a fellow citizen.

We think of what Saint Augustine said about justice a long time ago, but it still bears repeating: "Without justice, what are kingdoms but great bands of robbers?" That is what Saint Augustine said hundreds of years ago. JOE BIDEN has lived his life as a public official and as a man, as a citizen, with that same burning desire to bring justice into the dark corners of our world. And he knows that without that justice, someone is, in fact, robbed of so much—robbed of their dignity, robbed of their safety, robbed of a full life.

But I think I would say that maybe the best line, with all due respect to the Scriptures and to Saint Augustine, was one my father said. He wrote it down years ago, but he probably gave maybe the best description of what a public official should be about. I am not sure I have ever attributed this to anyone else but him. He said the most important qualities a public official can bring to their work are two things: No. 1, a passion for justice—which, of course, JOE BIDEN has in abundance—and a sense of outrage in the face of injustice; that if you have both of those, on most days, you are going to get it right. And his life as a U.S. Senator for 36 years, as Vice President for 8 years, and as a citizen for all of those years and more, has been about that passion for justice and a sense of outrage in the face of injustice.

We all know his record; we don't have to recite all of it. From the Violence Against Women Act, which we know is an acronym—VAWA—but it doesn't do justice to the name of what that meant. So many today have talked about how he saved the lives of women and families because of that legislation. So from VAWA to ARRA, as we call it—the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the act that helped dig this economy out of the ditch it was in and rescued this country and improved the lives of so many people—he not only worked to get it passed, but then he made sure it was implemented. It might be the most popular piece of legislation 25 years from now when people really appreciate what happened with the Recovery Act.

From diplomacy, to law enforcement, to not just supporting our troops, not just working on legislation and supporting them not only when his son was a member of our Armed Forces but long before that, to what he did very specifically to protect our troops—we know the scourge of IEDs, which was the No. 1 killer of our troops in Iraq and in Afghanistan. A lot of those troops' lives were saved because of JOE

BIDEN up-arming vehicles and doing all the work he did to protect our troops.

So whether it was national security or security on our streets, whether it was protecting women who would be the subject of abuse or helping children or improving our economy—on and on—we could talk about that record. But just as you can't just list achievements in a record and encapsulate what it means, so the same is true of a 36-year career in the U.S. Senate and then 8 years as Vice President.

Lincoln probably said it best. Lincoln said, "It is not the years in your life that matters, in the end, it is the life in those years." And that is, I think, true of JOE BIDEN as well.

Two more points. One of the best qualities of the Vice President as a man especially but also as a public official is his sense of gratitude. If you knew him for half an hour or for your whole life, you know that almost always he is speaking about people in his life who made him who he is today, whether it is his mother and father or whether it is his whole family, including brothers and sisters and his sons and daughters and, of course, Jill. It is a reminder of how grateful we should be. In so many ways, when you hear JOE BIDEN speak, his speeches tend to be, on many occasions, a hymn to gratitude, and that comes through all the time.

We know how much he suffered with all of the losses he has sustained. I was talking to him recently at an event in Scranton about his son Beau and his life and what a patriot Beau Biden was. I think today we can say the following about the Vice President: This is a man who was a great, great Vice President. This is a man who was a committed and very effective U.S. Senator, but maybe most important, he has been a faithful son, a loving and proud husband and father, and a patriot.

Thank you, sir, and God bless you.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, these speeches were just supposed to go on for 1 hour, and we are already at the 2-hour mark, but perhaps, since we are honoring you, this is most appropriate.

I would say to our colleagues and our guests, you say the name among us of JOE BIDEN, and a smile automatically comes to our lips, and that is because the Vice President is a lover of people. That is true. We know it is true. And that is why today we have this genuine affection being expressed.

Since the hour is late, my remarks are going to be very short, but I just want to highlight that it is very true and it is very characteristic. I can even tell all of the stories of the Biden family because I have heard them so much.

It is also very true that if you are talking to JOE and suddenly your wife comes up or your daughter comes up, all of a sudden, JOE is not focusing on you, he is giving his total attention to the ladies present, and that is most ap-

preciated. That, of course, is why he is such a big fan of the Nelson household, not only of Grace and Nan Ellen but also of Bill Junior. He always treats our children with respect and goes out of his way.

In Florida, fortunately we had the good fortune of seeing him a lot in his two campaigns as Vice President and then the campaign for the ticket in this last campaign. I can remember those days. It was so cold in a horse pasture west of Ocala. And I can remember recently just absolutely cooking in North Palm Beach on the stage in the hot sun, and JOE was always there making the case for whoever it was he was standing up for.

Of course, he always made you feel that you were welcome. I remember one time we got off an airplane, and he was going to his limousine and I am going back to the guest van in the back. He motions, I am to come with him. I said, "Mr. Vice President, I never presumed that I should come here." He says, "I always want you here with me when we are traveling together." That is what makes him so special.

Finally, I want to comment about Moonshot. Why is the effort at cancer research called the Moonshot? It is because we achieved what was almost the impossible when the President said we are going to the moon and return safely within the decade, and America marshaled the will and in fact did that incredible accomplishment. That is why we are going to have the Moonshot for cancer.

We have already made so much progress; but now, with the former Vice President of the United States heading up all the efforts where we can keep the attention on NIH, so it doesn't go from a level rocking along about \$24 billion, \$25 billion a year, and the stimulus shoots it in the first 2 years of the Vice President's office up to \$30 billion a year, then it drops down to \$24 billion, \$25 billion, and Dr. Francis Collins has to cancel 700 of the medical research grants that he has already issued. Because we have the Moonshot headed by JOE BIDEN, we are going to find the cure for all those kinds of cancer. That is the great legacy that the Vice President of the United States will have.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise in honor of your service.

I just want to tell my favorite JOE BIDEN story. This is a story the Vice President has heard me tell, but I want it on the Record because everyone should know this story. It is the story of an interaction between our Vice President on one of the most important days of his life and a young man from Richmond, VA, my hometown, on one of the most important days of his life.

It was election day 2008, and I was Governor of Virginia. I was responsible for the running of the elections in my

State that day when Senator JOE BIDEN was running for Vice President with our President, Barack Obama.

I received a call in the middle of the morning: There was going to be a surprise visit to a polling place in Richmond. After having voted in Wilmington, Senator BIDEN was going to make a stop in Richmond and wanted to meet some voters before he headed to Chicago to await the election results. We gave him the address of an elementary school polling place that was very near the Richmond Airport, and I raced there with my security detail to get there a few minutes before he arrived for a surprise visit with voters who were going to love having the chance to meet the soon-to-be Vice President. I got there a few minutes before Senator BIDEN arrived, and I saw a friend who had come to vote. I asked how he was doing. He said: I am doing great. I am really excited about voting today. And it is also a special day because I have a nephew with sickle cell anemia and he is casting his first vote, but he is so sick, he can't even get out of the vehicle.

I watched the election officials at the polling place take a voting machine from inside the school into the car so that his 18-year-old nephew could cast the first vote of his life. I saw this young man, the nephew of my friend, and he was very ill.

I said to my friend and his nephew: Can you wait here for 5 minutes? Because I think we can do something really exciting.

What?

Well, just wait.

And they said they would.

Within 5 minutes, Senator BIDEN came up to meet voters and shook the hands of those in line. I said: Senator, there is a young man here, and just as this day is very important to you, because I think you are about to be elected Vice President of the United States, for this young African-American male, who is very ill but extremely excited even in his illness to get out of his house to come here and cast his vote to elect the first African-American President—he is sitting there in that vehicle. Will you go and visit with him?

I didn't even have to finish the sentence and put the question mark at the end before Senator BIDEN shot across the parking lot and went up to the vehicle. The press corps was following him. The young man was sitting in the back seat. JOE just jumped in the front seat, closed the door, rolled up the window so nobody could hear the conversation, and the press corps gathered around all four sides of the vehicle with their cameras taking pictures of Senator BIDEN in an extremely animated and somewhat lengthy conversation with the 18-year-old who had just cast his vote. To me, that will always be the quintessential JOE BIDEN story.

JOE BIDEN is the Irish poet of American politicians. He and I share a passion for the Irish poet William Butler Yeats. Yeats, like our Vice President,

was not just a poet. He was a man of the public. He was a public official. People asked him to weigh in on political matters all the time.

Once, in the middle of the First World War, somebody asked Yeats to write a war poem. He wrote a war poem, and the poem was titled "On Being Asked for a War Poem." The poem says this:

I [often] think it better that in times like these

A poet's mouth be silent, for in truth . . .

He has had enough of meddling who can please

A young girl in the indolence of her youth,
Or an old man upon a winter's night.

The meaning of the poem is this: I may be a public figure. I may have a public job to do. I may be asked to do a public job and to claim upon matters of public importance. But sometimes even more than the matter of public importance is the ability to please a young girl or an old man—or an ill young man casting a first vote, an important vote.

The fact that you took your time on that day of importance to you to shed some light and offer some joy to someone who was struggling—that is the JOE BIDEN who has us here for 2 hours offering these tributes.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I never had the privilege of serving with you in this Chamber, but, like many of my colleagues, I have come to know you as a friend and public servant and a model and a mentor. I have barely enough time to say a few words of tribute here, but I will add more to my remarks on the RECORD.

What I want to say very simply is that you have inspired so many of us, beyond this Chamber, beyond the people whom you have known directly, and beyond the people with whom you have worked. Countless young people are involved in this noble profession because of your example.

At a time when public officials and politics are often held in little repute and often challenged in their integrity, you have given us a good name, you have given politics a good name, and you have enabled so many of us to serve with pride in a profession that is so vital to the continuance of our democracy. Beyond pieces of legislation, whether it is the Violence Against Women Act or the assault weapon ban or criminal justice—the list goes on—is that model of public service.

I want to close by saying that as long as I have known JOE BIDEN, I really came to know him through the eyes of his son. I had the honor of working and serving with Beau Biden when he was attorney general of the State of Delaware and I was attorney general of my State of Connecticut. My ambition in life is to have my four children talk about me with the sense of admiration and love and pride that Beau Biden talked about his dad.

I am very proud and grateful that we had the opportunity to vote today on a law that bears his name. As proud as

his dad is of him, his pride in his dad is an example that all of us as parents hope our children have for us.

I am proud to be in this Chamber and to have been sworn in to this Chamber by you, Mr. Vice President. I hope our paths will continue to cross, as I know they will, with so many of us in this Chamber and in this country. Thank you for your service.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, me too.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, in 1972 I was a young man in my last year at Boston College Law School, and I decided to run for State representative. I had a cousin who worked at NASA, an older cousin, the smart one, the physicist. He said: Well, there is a young man in Delaware who is running for the Senate.

So what is his name?

JOE BIDEN.

From that moment on, I was following the career of this Irishman, this latter-day descendent of Hubert Humphrey, a happy warrior, the man who stands up for the common man and woman in our country.

In 1972 you had this great campaign team led by John Marttila—the great John—who captured your spirit, your soul, what you represented now in this half century of American politics.

In 1976, when I ran for Congress, just 4 years later—the same as you, age 29—saying "I think I can run," I walked into the office of this man, John Marttila, in Boston, and it looked like a museum to JOE BIDEN with all the JOE BIDEN literature and messages on his wall. So from that moment on, from John Marttila, through Larry Rasky, through Ron Klain—through all of these people who worked for me and worked for you, I have been privileged to be able to chronicle your journey of work and inspiration for our country.

I think it is just perfect that you are the commander in chief of this rocket ship to the Moon to find the cure for cancer because that is a mission that has the right man who is going to be leading it. I think that each and every one of us out here knows that one of the reasons this bill is receiving such an overwhelming vote today is because of you, Mr. President. It is because of the respect we have for you. It is the knowledge that when you were negotiating this bill, at the end of the day, you were going to put the American people first, you were going to make sure that bill reflected the highest aspiration of every American.

So I want to speak briefly because there is a reception after this, and many people are still waiting to say hello to you. I think every Member wanted to come out here, and you inspired them to speak a lot longer than they may have intended on speaking, but it is because of the incredible respect and admiration they have for you. My best to you. My wife Susan's best to you. There has never been a

better public servant in American history. All my best.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, on behalf of all the people in our great State—and our dear colleague Senator Bayh is here because of his love as well—we want to tell you how grateful we are for your services, for the extraordinary job you have done as Vice President for President Obama.

Everybody is telling stories. As you know, I had the privilege of having you put your arm around me, and when everybody said there was no chance I could ever win, you said: You and I are a lot alike and you can do this and you can win.

I came back, and they said: What advice did Vice President BIDEN give you?

I said: He told me that I could win.

They said: Well, he is right a lot; I don't know about that one.

You turned out to be right.

Then we were blessed that your sons, Hunter and Beau, often came to Indiana during the summers. You would then come out as well. I will never forget going to the coffee shop one Sunday morning. The lady at the coffee shop said to me: This has been an unbelievable day because the Vice President came in with all his grandchildren; and, by the way, JOE, he bought ice cream for everybody in the store, and you have never done that.

I said how sorry I was that I never did that.

She also said: This is one of the greatest days of my life, to meet somebody who has always looked out for working families, who has always looked out for us.

That is how we see you back home. You have always looked out for us. You have always cared about us. As a second-generation Irish immigrant, you have always been an example to all of us that we can accomplish anything we dream of.

God bless you and Jill and your whole family. We are so lucky to have been touched by you.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Vice President BIDEN, earlier Hubert Humphrey's name was mentioned. You know the great love the people of Minnesota have for you. Vice President Humphrey was your mentor when you first got to the Senate, where you didn't even know if you were going to last a few months here, and he was there for you. You have extended that kindness to so many since then.

Vice President Mondale, another Minnesotan, has great affection and love for you, and I will report back to him tonight that I was here with you today.

When I first got elected to the Senate and made one of my first speeches about police funding to a completely empty Chamber—and I thought even my mom wasn't watching on C-SPAN—I walked out of this place and I got a

phone call on my cell phone and it was JOE BIDEN, then a Senator, saying “that was a really great speech.”

When you came to my State and one of my best friends suddenly lost her husband and you heard about it, you did not know who she was, you just heard the story, and in 2 weeks, on her first day back at work, she was driving home and she got a call from you. You talked to her for 20 minutes. When you were done and had given her all this wonderful advice, you said: We are not done; I want you to write down my phone number.

She said: I am driving, Mr. Vice President; I can't do that.

You said: Pull over.

She wrote your phone number on her hand. You did that for her, Mr. Vice President, and you have done that for so many Americans. On behalf of our entire State of Minnesota that has loved you forever, thank you.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, a few minutes ago, I sent up a note to you that I handwrote that said: “Flattery won't hurt you if you don't inhale, so don't breathe too deeply up there.”

I also recall walking into a hearing with EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy not too long ago in the House of Representatives, a joint House-Senate hearing. A lot of people had been there asking questions, and she was in the seat for 4 hours. It finally became my turn to ask a question, and I said to her: Is there any question, Administrator McCarthy, that you have not been asked today? She said: I wish somebody had asked me if I needed a bathroom break.

There are 30 more Senators in the cloakroom who want to come out and speak. If you need one, let us know and one of the pages or somebody will take your spot up there.

It has been a joy to sit here and listen to all these stories. JOHN CARNEY, our Congressman, Governor-elect, has been here and come and gone. He has gone back to the House to go into session. He used to work for you, and you are one of his great mentors. He wants you to know he was here, in case you didn't.

I want to say to CHRIS COONS, who put this all together, making possible a wonderful tribute, this is the Senate at its best. It is wonderful to see some of our still young colleagues who have come back to visit us and to be with us on this special, special day.

Over the years, people have asked me why I have had some success in my life, and I say that my sister and I picked the right parents. My sister and I picked the right parents. JOE BIDEN and his brother and sister picked the right parents. I have had the privilege of knowing them both. When your dad was sick and in the hospital, I visited and spent time with him, just the two of us.

JOE, I want to say for those who maybe didn't know your parents, they

valued education and made sure you got a good one, along with his brother and sister. Val is up there somewhere. I want to say hi to Val. They valued education and people of faith. I am Protestant, and JOE and his family are Catholic, but he doesn't wear it on his sleeve. I will tell you this, nobody believes in the Golden Rule of treating other people the way you want to be treated any more than JOE BIDEN.

Nobody adheres to Matthew 25, the “Least of These,” any more than JOE BIDEN. Nobody does a better reading of James 2: “Show me your faith by your words, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.” He doesn't just talk a good game. He doesn't talk a whole lot about his faith, but he sure lives it.

From his family—from his mom and dad—he learned the importance of family and the importance of loyalty to his family and, frankly, to his friends—his multitude of friends. He learned there is a difference between right and wrong and figure out what it is and do right. Do it all the time.

He learned a little bit about common sense. My dad used to say to my sister and me when we did some boneheaded stuff, just use some common sense. I think your dad said that to you once or twice as well. One of the things your mom used to say to you was, if you are knocked down, get up—the idea you just never give up. You know you are right, never give up. That is JOE BIDEN.

People say to us in this Chamber I am sure every day that they wouldn't want our job. I wouldn't want your job. I know you heard that a lot of times. I think we are fortunate to have these jobs and responsibilities to serve. An even tougher job is to be married to one of us. Several people talked about Jill and your bride—for how many years? Almost 40 years. Is that possible? I first saw Jill Biden when I was a graduate student when I was just out of the Navy. I was a graduate student at the University of Delaware. I happened to see her on campus. I thought then, and I would say now, one of the two loveliest people I think I have ever seen. The other being Martha Carper. Not only is she lovely—as JOE knows—on the outside, really lovely on the inside. She is a person with deep caring, a person with incredible warmth and compassion. She is a terrific educator. She taught in our State in public schools. She taught in a hospital for folks with special needs. She taught at Delaware Technical Community College when it was selected as the best technical community college in the Nation during the time that she was on the faculty there.

She continued as Second Lady to continue to critique, but she started off in a place called Willow Grove, PA. There is a naval air station there where I used to fly P-3 aircraft—mission commander—out of there. I retired as a Navy captain in 1991. She was just down the road, growing up with her four sisters, Jill Jacobs and the Jacobs girls. I am sure they broke a lot of hearts.

In the case of Jill Biden, she helped to mend one. As much as anybody, Val and your family are hugely supportive and helped you get through a terribly tough time, but I think Jill perhaps made you whole. She got her undergrad, I believe, from the University of Delaware. She has two master's degrees—a Ph.D. focused on how to increase retention in community colleges around the country. She got those advanced degrees while working and raising a family, three kids that any of us would be proud to claim as our own.

Last week, I happened to be in a classroom in a school where the Vice President probably has been before, Mount Pleasant Elementary School, right down the road from the high school. I was in a classroom of a woman by the name of Wendy Turner, who is the Delaware Teacher of the Year. I had a chance to be with her and her grade school kids. We all gathered around together, and I sat on a stool. They gathered around me. There were about 20, 25 kids. I said: Why is she such a great teacher? Talking about Wendy Turner, Teacher of the Year.

They said: She loves kids. She loves us. They said: She knows her stuff. She really knows what she is talking to us about. She knows how to make clear why it is important, like when we leave school, and why it is important we learn these things. She believes everybody can learn—everybody can learn.

I thought about her, and I think about Jill Biden today. She is that kind of educator as well, continues to be that kind of educator as well.

A lot has been said today of the Cancer Moonshot that JOE has been leading with great skill and success here, especially today. Before there was Cancer Moonshot, there was JOE BIDEN's breast health initiative, which helped thousands of young women to learn about the importance of early detection for breast cancer.

Beau went into the military, Delaware National Guard, deployed to Iraq. Some people would send cookies and packages to their kids and maybe write emails or Skype with them. Jill decided she was going to take that experience and create something with Delaware Boots on the Ground to look out for families. Later on, as Second Lady, working with Michelle Obama, she created something they called Joining Forces, which focuses on education for military families—education, employment opportunities, access to wellness services.

She even managed to write a book. She wrote a book from a child's point of view of having a loved one in their family deployed overseas in the military. As I said earlier, she helped raise three terrific kids.

Sometimes I like to quote Maya Angelou, who sang at the second inauguration of Barack Obama and JOE BIDEN, and she passed away not long ago. Maya Angelou said something that I think is appropriate for all of us today when she said: People may not

remember what you said, people may not remember what you do, but they will remember how you made them feel. One of the threads through everything that has been said here today really reminds me of what Maya Angelou said because people may not remember what we said. They may not remember what we do, but there are not just thousands, not just tens of thousands, not just hundreds of thousands, but there are millions of people in this country who will remember how you and Jill made them feel—cared for, important, loved.

I know our Vice President likes music, and as a Boomer he later on liked a British group. I forget what their Fab Four was called. I think it might have been the Beatles, and maybe the best rock 'n' roll album ever, "Abbey Road," ends with these lyrics—the last part of Abbey Road, side two, was largely written by Paul McCartney. The last words on "Abbey Road" were these words: "The love you take is equal to the love you make."

You are going to take a lot of love with you, and Jill as well, far from here and for the rest of your lives. God bless you.

Mr. President—I have always wanted to call you Mr. President. With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I would like to invite all of my colleagues to join us in a reception in honor of the Vice President. I remind any colleagues who wish to speak who did not have the opportunity to submit their comments for the RECORD, and I very much look forward to our jointly presenting a bound copy to the Vice President.

Thank you for your service, and we look forward to hearing from you at the reception.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, this is one of those weeks where, every 6 years or 4 years or 2 years, we pause and pay tribute to those who have been elected to the Senate and have served with us and will be retiring or were possibly defeated in the last election.

KELLY AYOTTE

The first Senator I wish to talk about is KELLY AYOTTE, from the great

State of New Hampshire. KELLY's departure from the Senate is a great loss for all of us. I remember the day KELLY AYOTTE became a rising star, not only on the horizon of Republican politics but more importantly on the horizon of the Senate.

During her campaign 6 years ago, we would get phone calls asking: Have you heard about KELLY? Everybody knew who KELLY was. She was the attorney general of the State of New Hampshire, running for the U.S. Senate, and she was catching fire. She did catch fire and won in convincing fashion. She is a great lady with a great family and has done a phenomenal job.

Our U.S. Armed Forces are better today because of her efforts and hard work. We passed the agreement to go to the final passage on the authorization of the military appropriations today, and in large measure, KELLY AYOTTE was behind that. When we were debating our policy on interrogation and torture, KELLY AYOTTE was on top of that. Every significant decision we have made in the last 6 months, whether it was our military, policies, or process, she has been at the forefront of those decisions and has done a phenomenal job.

I wish her the very best in her career and future, and I thank her for the service she has given to our country.

As a son of the South, in Georgia we love New Hampshireites anytime we can get one, and KELLY is the best. They have the best lobsters, the best clams, and the best attorney general and Senator in KELLY AYOTTE.

God bless you, KELLY, and best of luck to you.

BARBARA BOXER

At this point, I wish to pause and pay attention to BARBARA BOXER from California. A lot of my colleagues will say: Wait a minute. Why are you talking about BARBARA BOXER? You are a Republican. She is an icon in the Democratic Party. She is a liberal, and you are a conservative.

She is a great Senator, and I will tell you why. BARBARA and I served on the Ethics Committee for the last 9 years. When I was asked to go on the committee, she was the chairman. Later on, I succeeded her as the chairman. I am the chairman today, and she is still a member until she retires.

The Ethics Committee is the one assignment nobody wants to get. But when you get it, you want to have somebody who will do what is right. Regardless of their party, you need somebody who will do what is right for the Member, the institution, and will carry out their responsibilities under the Constitution, which all of us are obligated to do in the Senate.

In the last 9 years, I worked with BARBARA BOXER on any number of complaints, allegations, and cases against Members of the Senate for unethical conduct or conduct unbecoming of a Senator. We have admonished some, cleared some, and recommended the expulsion of some, and some have re-

signed because of our investigation. I take no pride in anyone leaving the Senate because of the actions of the committee, but I take great pride in the fact that no one in 9 years has questioned the integrity of the Senate Ethics Committee, the job it has done, or the final decision it has made, and I give most of the credit for that to BARBARA BOXER. She is a liberal Democrat, and I am a conservative Republican, but when it comes to calling balls and strikes in terms of ethics, we call them down the middle. That is a credit to the institution, a credit to her, and a credit to the Ethics Committee.

At this moment, I want to pause and say to my retiring friend BARBARA BOXER: Thank you for your service to the country, thank you for what you have meant to the State of California, and thank you for what you have meant to the institution of the Senate and the commitment to ethical behavior by our Members. Thank you for making it a standard that you and I stood for. It was a pleasure for me to serve with you and be called one of the members of the odd couple. ISAKSON and BOXER, the two Senate chairs that love our country, are committed to ethics and will always try to do what is exactly right.

God bless you, BARBARA. Best of luck to you.

I yield the floor.

HURRICANE MATTHEW RECOVERY

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, about a month and a half ago, I came into this Chamber to talk about the damage that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. It was actually 2 months ago to the day that Hurricane Matthew hit eastern North Carolina, and I don't think that many people, unless you have been down there—even in the State, it is hard to really conceive of the extent of damage that Matthew caused, even for people in my part of the State, the middle part of the State, Charlotte, so I know it is difficult for those who may be in other States and did not see the local news coverage. Matthew took 28 lives. It displaced tens of thousands of people in the near term, and now thousands of people are still without homes. It damaged businesses and infrastructure. Miles of Interstate 95 were underwater. Bridges have been washed out. We have a lot of damage we have to recover from.

We have one community that was washed away by Hurricane Floyd and was washed away again just about 17 years later with Hurricane Matthew, neighborhoods completely underwater. I was in Fayetteville. There was a Habitat for Humanity neighborhood that had 90 homes. Six of the houses are uninhabitable now. They were in areas that were not flood plains.

This was a 1,000-year rain event, a 500-year flood event. In other words, this is not likely to happen again in our lifetime, maybe not even in the pages' lifetimes.

It was an incredible event that is going to take a lot of time and effort to

recover from and a lot of resources to rebuild. We are still trying to tally the human and economic toll. It is going to take probably decades to fully recover from this disaster, as we are seeing with Floyd, but we will recover because that is what North Carolinians do. That is what Americans do.

To begin the long rebuilding process, though, we need Federal assistance. That is why Gov. Pat McCrory formally requested a disaster assistance package and why we very quickly got a team together—my staff, who led the effort, working with Congressman PRICE, members of the delegation, Senator BURR—to try to figure out what we need to do to provide assistance to North Carolina so that they can begin their recovery. Over the past weeks, we have worked very closely with the Appropriations Committee.

I want to particularly thank the leadership of the Appropriations Committee. They have done an extraordinary job of working with us, advising us on what we need to do to make our requests clear, to make it more likely that we would be able to get some resources for North Carolina.

I specifically want to thank two of my staff who have worked very hard. They were literally working on the disaster plan after the rains fell and before the rivers started cresting. I want to thank Towers Mingledorff and Kayla Dolan from my office. They did extraordinary work. I am proud of the work they have done on our behalf and on behalf of North Carolinians. At the end of the day, we now have a continuing resolution as a result of their hard work and cooperation with the Appropriations Committee. We have a provision in the continuing resolution to allocate some \$300 million to North Carolina for immediate needs to assist in recovery efforts. This is a beginning. We will continue to work with the Federal agencies which that money will be directed to and then ultimately down to the State so that we can find out what additional needs are there.

I think it is extraordinary that 8 weeks to the day, we were able to work together, get the support of the Members of this body, and get the support of the Appropriations Committee to at least begin the process. We have to help these North Carolinians get back to their normal lives. We have to put people back in their homes. We have to allow businesses to recover and bring people back in and let them go back to their daily lives and working. We are going to do it.

We also need to help the farmers. There are thousands of acres of land that were affected by the floods. In some cases, the flooding was so extensive that these farms—many of them were already ready for next year's crops. Some of them still have crops in the field, covered by sand and sediment. They will need to be cleared.

In other cases, there are washed-out bridges, and there are ditches and drainage areas that will all have to be

cleared out so that we can get the ninth largest agriculture State in the Nation ready to produce crops next year.

I know we will do it. I know we will do it because we have the support of this body, and we are going to be able to start sending that money and that desperately needed support to North Carolina. But in the coming weeks and months, we will also spend time figuring out what more we can do. In the meantime, I want to let everybody in North Carolina know that if they need help, they should contact my office. They can reach me online at tillis.senate.gov. We will do everything we can to help them recover and to get back to their daily lives.

Again, I thank the Members of this body who have supported our efforts to provide this much-needed aid.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to introduce the Senate to a young man I met last Friday. His name is Luke Hwang. Luke was born in Korea. His parents brought him to the United States when he was in the fifth grade. They took him to New Jersey. Luckily he had taken some classes in Korea and was able to speak English. He grew up in Palisades Park.

He said:

It didn't take me long to adjust and assimilate because my elementary school offered bilingual classes. . . . This is the kind of America I have known and experienced—not just mundanely accepting diversity but going above and beyond to serve the unique needs of a diverse community.

This is an amazing young man. He started off with a passion for science. He was accepted into the math and science magnet school called Bergen County Academies, ranked by Newsweek as one of the top five public high schools in the United States. At Bergen County Academies, Luke won several awards at regional science fairs. He volunteered as an emergency medical technician in the local ambulance corps as a high school kid.

Because of his academic achievements, Luke was accepted as a university scholar in the Macaulay Honors College at the City College of New York. In 2013 Luke graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor's of science in chemistry. He received an award for the highest grade point average of any chemistry major in the school.

This brilliant young man is currently a Ph.D. candidate in chemistry at the University of Chicago. He works as a researcher at the university. In his spare time, he volunteers for the Chicago Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, an organization that tries to help poor people in that community.

Here is the kicker: Luke is undocumented. He was brought to the United States in the fifth grade and turned out to be one of the smartest chemistry

students in his high school, in his college, and now in his graduate program.

When I met him last Friday—he is a very quiet fellow—I said: What do you want to do, Luke?

He said: I want to teach. That is what I would like to do, research and teaching.

Well, here is the problem: He is undocumented. He is not legally in the United States of America. His family brought him here. They did not file the papers, or if they could have, they did not file the papers. Whatever the case, this young man grew up here in the United States, took advantage of the best schools in New Jersey, and now is going to one of the best universities in the United States and is destined to do great things in his life. Maybe he will teach. Maybe he will start a company. Maybe he will just come up with some breakthrough achievement in chemistry that will change the lives of many people.

What are we going to do with Luke Hwang? Well, there are 744,000 people just like him. These are young people who are undocumented, whom President Obama gave a chance to stay here in the United States after they went through a criminal background check, after they paid their filing fee.

He said: You can stay and study in the United States of America. We won't deport you. You can travel to another country and come back without being arrested. You can work in this country if you wish. You have a work permit.

There are 744,000 of them under what is called the DACA Program. Well, the new President says he is going to eliminate that program and eliminate the only thing that is keeping Luke Hwang in the United States; that is, the DACA Program protection against deportation. We can't let that happen. Why would we do that to this young man who was brought here as a fifth grader? Why would we walk away from his talents? Why would we say: Despite all that you have achieved with the highest grade point average in chemistry, America does not need you, Luke. Of course we need him and many more just like him.

I am trying to find a way to give people like him a chance to stay in the United States without being deported, to continue their education in medical school, in law school, in graduate programs, and in so many other different fields. Well, there was a breath of hope today. The President-elect was interviewed for Time magazine. Here is what he said about DREAMers and people like Luke:

We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud. They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen.

That statement by the President-elect gives me some hope that I can

give Luke some hope and others just like him.

We can straighten out this immigration system in this country, but let's not do it at the expense of these young people. Let's do our job, but in the meantime, let's us protect them. Let's let them continue their education. Let's let them achieve what they want to achieve for themselves and for America. We will be a better nation for it.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM and I are working on a bill. Whether you are for immigration reform or against immigration reform, join us in the basic proposition that we need to protect young people like this while we debate this important issue. I think that is the right to do. It is certainly the right thing to do for this young man. Some day, he is going to do something very important in this world. I would like to have it happen in the United States.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the need for regulatory reform and also on the work that we have been doing and are doing in the Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight, of which I have had the great privilege to chair in the 114th Congress. I would be remiss if I did not also recognize our ranking member from Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY, for his contributions to our oversight efforts.

As chairman, one of our main goals has been to conduct a thorough and systemic review of the regulatory process, focusing on the impacts of these regulations on citizens, businesses, and—most importantly—solutions to these problems. We have sought to make certain that Federal regulations are promulgated in a transparent, open process with adequate public participation. Our subcommittee has held hearings conducting oversight on various aspects of the rulemaking process. This includes the adequacy of the science the agencies rely on when promulgating regulations, the increasing number of unfunded mandates agencies impose on State and local governments, the impact of lawsuits on the rulemaking process, and the impact these regulations have on small businesses, State and local governments, and landowners.

Since I began working in the Senate nearly 2 years ago, it has become increasingly clear that economic growth, American innovation, and job creation are being smothered by heavy-handed

Federal regulations imposed by Washington bureaucrats who think they know what is best for American families, States, local governments, and businesses.

According to the American Action Forum, since 2009 this administration has finalized 2,973 regulations at a cost of \$862.7 billion dollars as of today, December 7.

Of these, 179 regulations have come from the Environmental Protection Agency, costing American taxpayers \$342.5 billion.

Since writing this speech—or beginning to write it, about 1 week ago—10 more regulations have been finalized, with 5 of those coming from the EPA. EPA regulations alone make up nearly half of the cost of all the regulations finalized in the last 7 years.

As chairman of the EPW Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight, it has become clear to me that EPA is one of the most egregious government agencies in imposing burdensome Federal regulations on citizens, States, and businesses. We have found a failure to review the most current and important science the Agency supposedly bases its regulations on.

We have found that the sue-and-settle process utilized by special interest groups leads to a rushed and reckless rulemaking process that does not follow the proper regulatory process or allow for adequate public participation from those these rules will impact the most.

Further, the EPA regularly fails to take into account how their regulations will impact States and shows little regard for how the States will use their limited resources to comply with these regulations, thereby issuing rules that impose Federal unfunded mandates on States and local and tribal governments.

From 2009 to 2015, the EPA issued a total of 19 rules that contained costly, unfunded mandates on State governments.

The Office of Management and Budget's 2015 report to Congress estimated that Federal regulations and unfunded mandates cost States, cities, and the general public between \$57 billion and \$85 billion every single year. State and local governments are then required to enforce these misguided regulations that have been promulgated by Washington bureaucrats who lack any understanding of the real-world consequences of their regulations or the unique characteristics of the various States.

Alarming, we have also found that the EPA regularly fails to conduct a thorough and accurate economic analysis, which should provide an accurate representation of the cost their regulations will impose on taxpayers and businesses.

This leads to grossly inaccurate economic analysis of regulations that affect huge swathes of the U.S. economy and thousands of U.S. businesses and American jobs.

A 2014 report from the Government Accountability Office found that on multiple occasions and with major costly regulations, the EPA did not provide the public with an explanation of the economic information behind its decisionmaking, despite its obligations to do so.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently issued the *Michigan v. EPA* decision, finding that the EPA unreasonably failed to consider costs when deciding to regulate mercury emissions from powerplants. This impacts the ability of our businesses to conduct business on a daily basis, to compete in a competitive global marketplace, and to employ Americans in steady, well-paying jobs. Notably, small businesses make up 99.7 percent of U.S. employer firms.

Federal agencies are required by law to examine the impact of their regulations and what it will have on small businesses. Throughout our oversight process, we found that the U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy submitted comments to the EPA expressing concerns over a number of recent rulemakings, such as the waters of the United States rule and the EPA's greenhouse gas regulations.

However, the EPA moved forward with these regulations with little to no regard for their impact on U.S. small businesses. They are the backbone of the U.S. economy.

As a result, rather than creating jobs and focusing on growing their business, U.S. small businesses are forced to use limited resources to comply with a myriad of costly and burdensome regulations.

This year alone, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals imposed a nationwide injunction on the waters of the United States rule, and the Supreme Court imposed a nationwide stay on the Clean Power Plan. While I applaud these decisions, we should not be forced to rely on the courts to prevent such regulations from taking effect.

I am also deeply troubled by the reports that the EPA and the Army Corps are illegally continuing to implement the Waters of the United States rule despite the court's nationwide stay.

During our subcommittee field hearings in Rapid City, SD, earlier this year, we heard from several witnesses about the difficulty and confusion landowners are facing with regard to the waters of the United States. I am concerned that, if this continues, it may get to the point where the property that is the subject of these burdensome regulations loses its value.

Make no mistake. I understand that rules and regulations have a place in society. We all want clean air, clean water, and safe chemicals, but there is a better way to achieve this without imposing burdensome regulations. These flaws in the EPA's rulemaking process have prevented agencies from making well-informed decisions. Even more troubling, the public, State and

local governments, and American businesses are prevented from understanding the need, basis for, and the real impact of regulations.

This regulatory quagmire did not happen overnight. It comes from decades of increased Federal bureaucracy, out-of-control spending, and Federal agencies not being held accountable for their actions. Similarly, we will not come to a solution overnight. It will take a serious bipartisan effort to move the ball forward to address this problem. Throughout this Congress, the goal of our subcommittee has been to unify and lead an effort to advance meaningful regulatory reform in Congress.

We must make certain the regulatory process reflects transparency and sound science and is based on a realistic economic foundation and meaningful public participation that considers the multitude of facets of the U.S. economy.

With an ally in the White House next year who has committed to reducing burdensome regulations, I plan to continue this effort throughout the next Congress and beyond. The success of the U.S. economy and the creation of American jobs depends on Congress making a concerted effort to take back their authority and rein in the rule-making process.

I thank you, and I yield the floor.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, if the Senator from South Dakota would rescind his request to yield the floor, I would like to share one thought.

First of all, I am honored to chair the committee of which you are a subcommittee chairman, and what a Godsend the Senator from South Dakota has been, I have to say to my friend. I was concerned, with this last election coming along, with what might be happening. I think people are aware of what has happened to our military. They are aware of what is happening with the debt going all the way up from \$10.6 trillion to \$20 trillion, the largest increase of all the Presidents, from George Washington, Bush 1, and Bush 2.

My concern was that people wouldn't realize what an impairment the overregulation has been to our businesses in how we are no longer competitive. I think the Senator really struck the note here that it had a lot to do with the awareness of the public.

The Senator knows how many hearings we had on the Clean Power Plan in our committee, and the Senator's subcommittee. We actually had 10 hearings and we had three oversight reports.

I have to say the liberals really like overregulation. Does the Senator know why? This is the question I want to ask the Senator because, generally, if you are of a liberal philosophy, you want to have as much control centered here in Washington, DC. However, when you

get home and they get complaints about overregulation, what this is costing them, they then say: Well, that is not the case now because I had nothing to do with it. That was the regulation.

That is what we are in the midst of right now.

I have a friend who is the head of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau who came to me and he said: Have you seen this document that we have? This is true in South Dakota as well as Oklahoma, that the major problem with the farmers in America today is not anything that is found in the agriculture bill, it is overregulation, primarily by the EPA. The Senator from South Dakota struck a nerve when he spoke about the waters bill, the Waters of the United States. My State is an arid State, but they know full well if the Federal Government can take away from States that jurisdiction of regulating water, what will happen in my State of Oklahoma?

So I would ask my friend—I think a lot of what happened on November 8 has to do with overregulation, and I think we have devoted a lot of time to that. I would suspect the same thing is true in South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. I thank the Senator for the question. The answer is, yes, we have spent a lot of time not only because it is critically a very important item to address—because in the United States today we spend over \$1.9 trillion a year responding to the Federal regulatory morass that we have. That is one-half of a trillion dollars more than what we pay in personal income taxes on April 15.

For people who are producers and have to respond not only in terms of the cost of the regulations but in terms of requesting from a Federal agency the ability simply to mow the ditches, seems to me to be overreach that most people with common sense and the rest of America simply don't think is necessary.

Mr. INHOFE. And, too, I would say the wisdom of the statements brought out that if we stop and think about it, over half of the States had a lawsuit against the Clean Power Plan. That is 29 States. Of course, I am sure that had a lot to do with the U.S. Supreme Court putting a stay on this, and now of course we will have a different administration, but I guess maybe we missed the boat on that one.

Overregulation has been the problem. People have not been as aware of that as they are of other problems. I think that had a lot to do with what happened on November 8 and what is going to happen in the future, particularly in your subcommittee and my committee.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I appreciate those comments, and I appreciate the facts that the Senator is bringing out here. This is something that cannot be done overnight; it has to be done in a businesslike manner.

The real challenge is to listen to the individuals who are impacted and to make reasonable regulations because

we all want to make sure we have a clean America but also an America that can get back to business again employing people, putting them back to work. Then we can begin building the economy so we can afford to actually provide for the next generation so they don't have the problems we see right now with family income down over 6 percent in just the last 9 years.

So this is a part of it. It is a significant part not just in the cost but in the impact on our economy as well.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business, and I ask unanimous consent that our distinguished colleague from Colorado, Senator BENNET, follow my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

FAMILY FIRST LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, right now, this evening, hundreds of thousands of vulnerable youngsters across America are living in foster care, separated from family and growing up in a constant struggle instead of in a loving home. For years, this body has worked on a bipartisan basis to come up with an alternative—we call it the Family First legislation—in order to give new hope to our youngsters.

I am particularly grateful to Senator BENNET because he and I have teamed up on this with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, including Chairman HATCH, KEVIN BRADY—the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee—and Congressman BUCHANAN. We have had a bipartisan team working for this. Now, in the waning moments of this Congress, after the legislation passed the House unanimously, after there were a number of hearings in the Finance Committee, and after objections were raised when we used the process in the Senate called the hotline to see if Senators had problems with this legislation and three indicated they had concerns, and we resolved all of them—yet it looks like this Senate is going to go home and end up continuing a policy that causes so much pain to vulnerable children and their families.

What our bipartisan bill would do is to say that for the first time, foster care dollars could be used to keep families together instead of ripping them apart. For example, if in a family a parent has bumped up against substance abuse challenges or mental health services and a grandparent or an uncle would like to help out, that is exactly what could be done under our proposal.

Now, over Thanksgiving—and I truncated the description of what happened into just a couple of sentences—over Thanksgiving, the Family First Act was included in the 21st Century Cures package. The legislation passed earlier

today. And all of us—Senator BENNET, Chairman BRADY—all of us said together that it sure looks like we are on our way.

After having months to come forward to work out concerns—and I will say to the distinguished Presiding Officer who has been kind enough to talk to me about this, we basically said that if a State is having problems meeting these kinds of opportunities—perhaps there aren't enough families—well, we just give them more time. In effect, we would say: OK. You have made a good-faith effort, we will give you a bit more time. But still, at the last moment, there was opposition that swooped in—opposition that really hadn't registered any specific concerns during those years and months in which we worked on this legislation. At the eleventh hour, the Family First Act was stripped out of the Cures package. That is why I voted no.

By dropping Families First, the Senate basically is sending a message today to the most vulnerable, neglected children in America that it is just fine with us if they just wait a little bit longer. They probably are saying: Well, where else do we look for help? By the way, there aren't a lot of places because Chairman BRADY, Chairman BUCHANAN, Congressman LEVIN, the other part of the Capitol, did a terrific job coming together. So when those families who have been neglected go looking for somebody else to help, when the House has done its job and the administration is with you, there is only the U.S. Senate. I am curious whether anybody is going to come here tonight and say they are not on the side of the neglected youngsters and families whom Senator BENNET and I want to stand up for.

So I am going to just make a couple of additional comments and then turn this over to Senator BENNET.

The Family First Act reaches out to the families who are struggling with addiction to opioids or other substances, it helps with programs that fight child abuse and neglect, and it also makes it a special priority to set basic standards for foster care facilities and group homes. I want to emphasize that point just for a moment. Some troubled or abused youngsters have been through such severe trauma that they need the kind of help you can only get in a temporary, high-quality treatment facility. They are kids who are struggling with mental illnesses and behavioral problems, young people suffering from addiction, victims of sex trafficking. The support they need is unique and they need access to reliable care in a safe place.

But these kinds of placements shouldn't be a destination; they should really be an intervention. And whenever we can, we need to make it possible for the kids to have the opportunity to reunite with kin or join a foster or adoptive family.

For the first time, our bill laid down a roadmap so youngsters don't have to

face the prospect of growing up in the kinds of struggling circumstances I have described. There would be standards guided by the States and laid out to protect the kids. They would raise the bar for group homes and make sure the kids aren't sent away and forgotten. In effect, the bill turns the system on its head. I think I shared that thought with the distinguished Presiding Officer. Instead of paying a dollar for families to be split up, the bill says let's find a way to use that dollar to help the families stay together. Let's see if the dollar can keep a youngster safe at home or with kin, where he or she is most likely to be healthy and happy and succeed in school.

The bill has 28 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate.

I also want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY because he has been in our corner, along with Senator BENNET and Chairman HATCH, month after month after month. I hope we can work this out overnight so Families First can pass; if not tonight, in the morning. It is the right policy for vulnerable kids. It is the right policy for families, the right policy for taxpayers. What we are doing today isn't helping vulnerable kids and families the way it ought to.

Five hundred organizations, led by the pediatricians, nurse practitioners, the Catholic bishops, and the Children's Defense Fund, all agree with our basic premise: try to find ways to keep families together and only look for something else where you have those extraordinary circumstances where you need another kind of care. The status quo is not working, and it seems to me we have a choice. We have a choice tonight and in the morning, with the 114th Congress wrapping up, closing the books, packing up, heading home for the holiday season—let's make sure before that wrap-up is finished that we haven't forgotten vulnerable children and families.

With that, I yield the floor.

I note by virtue of unanimous consent that Senator BENNET has recognition. He has been an invaluable colleague, a terrific member of the Finance Committee, and I appreciate his leadership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I will be brief.

I want to thank Mr. WYDEN, the Senator from Oregon and the ranking member of the Finance Committee, for his leadership on this bill. I thank, as he did, Senator HATCH for his leadership on this bill and Senator GRASSLEY for his leadership on this bill.

As the Senator from Oregon indicated, this bill passed unanimously in the House of Representatives. This bill passed with 500 groups supporting the bill from every geographic area in the United States. There are groups from Oregon. There are groups from Colorado. There are groups from the Presiding Officer's State that have

weighed in on this and said we should have this legislation passed. We have had testimony in the Finance Committee from people who were foster children who came to the Congress to testify about what had gone wrong in their lives as a result of the system we have in place today, who still made the time to come here to advocate on behalf of children all over the country who are situated in the same way they once were.

Now, because of a disagreement in the Senate, this bipartisan bill that passed the House unanimously, that has almost 30 cosponsors in the U.S. Senate, a bill that was supported universally by the testimony we had in the Finance Committee, somehow can't get done before we leave for the holidays. That would be a terrible shame, a terrible stain on this Senate.

Tonight there are 50,000 children in Colorado who are in foster care. There are over 650,000 children in the United States of America. What we have heard from them, what we have heard from their advocates, what we have heard from people who serve them—Republicans and Democrats alike—is that the institutional settings that too many of them are consigned to because of the way the law is written today is not the best thing for foster children; that families who can support them and who can nurture them, when they get the benefit of some help, are a far better place for foster children to be than these institutions. When it comes to drug addiction, when it comes to graduation rates from high school, when it comes to attending college—all of these things are affected by the way the current law exists.

The Presiding Officer may know that half of the cases of foster children in the United States are related, one way or another, to the scourge of opium addiction that is happening in the United States. This bill allows us to recognize that. It allows the people who serve the children and the families best to be able to intervene in a way that can keep the families together longer. What we know from the testimony in the hearings is that is the best thing for foster kids, it is the best thing for our States, and it is the best thing for the country.

So I join my colleague from Oregon in saying we should not go home with this unresolved. We should not go home, with the kind of momentum that exists for this bill inside the Congress and, much more important than that, outside the Congress, without having addressed this vulnerable population of people who live in the United States.

It is my fervent hope that we in the Senate will find a way to come to our senses and do our job, just as the people who came here to testify did their job, expecting that the U.S. Congress would respond to their description of their life experience, and what went wrong in a foster care setting has been established by the U.S. Congress. It is

up to us to fix it, and that is what we can do tonight or tomorrow morning, I hope, at the very latest.

With that, Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Oregon for his leadership on this bill. I thank, once again, the thoughtful chairman of the Finance Committee, ORRIN HATCH from Utah, for his leadership on this bill, and I hope over the next 12 or 24 hours we find a way to get this through the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PEARL HARBOR DAY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, on this Pearl Harbor Day, we should learn the lessons of the past and seize new opportunities for America and Asia and beyond. The great lesson of Pearl Harbor—and more broadly World War II—was America's commitment to utterly defeat our enemies by whatever means necessary and then, when victory was secure, to bring them back into the community of civilized nations.

It was an extraordinary achievement. To think that if, on December 7, 1941, I were to tell you that Japan would be, on December 7, 2016, a staunchly democratic ally, a vital security and economic partner to the United States, you would have said that I was barking mad.

Here we are, three-quarters of a century later, and the day of infamy has become a day of remembrance, reflection, and above all gratitude—gratitude for that greatest of generations who answered the call to service after Pearl Harbor, who stood staunchly with our allies, looked the evil of the axis squarely in the eyes, and saved the free world. They are leaving us now, making it all the more important that we assure each and every one of them of our boundless thanks while we still can. Indeed, I would encourage each and every one of us to thank every veteran we know, every veteran we encounter, every man and woman serving this country who risks their lives to keep us safe.

We can also find much to be thankful for today as what had seemed unthinkable has come to pass. A nation that brutally attacked us 75 years ago today can now be a great and good friend. It is a tribute to both the Japanese and the American people that we have been able to not ignore or whitewash the past but to learn from it and come to the understanding that we are so much stronger as allies than as adversaries.

As a Texan, I am personally appreciative of the fruits of this alliance. We host a range of Japanese companies who have invested in our State, with Toyota, for example, building its new

North American headquarters in Plano this year and creating some 4,000 new jobs, all in Texas. Also this year, the Lockheed Martin plant in Fort Worth has started to produce the F-35s that Japan is purchasing to bolster its defenses against increasing regional aggression from China and North Korea.

So against all odds, the attack on Pearl Harbor has been transformed, and as we face great challenges around the world, and particularly in Asia, we can be grateful today to have our Japanese friends standing by our side, which is yet another lesson from the post-World War II era to be on the lookout not just for challenges and dangers but for unexpected opportunities. We might be forgiven as we contend with hostile nations with nuclear capability or intent—nations such as North Korea or Iran—to see a glass half empty and become consumed with fears of another Pearl Harbor-like attack potentially so much more catastrophic and deadly than the one in 1941.

That would be a mistake. As with some of the fortitude our parents and grandparents showed, we can now count new allies as our partners, not just Japan but also—and equally stunningly—Germany. The list does not end there. We have Israel, which had yet to be born in 1941, not to mention the eastern and central European countries that languished so long under Soviet domination but now are helping build enduring democracies, many of which have joined NATO.

That is simply amazing. If I had told you even 30 years ago that there would be a Czech Republic or a Republic of Poland that would be key NATO allies, I would have again been met with well-founded skepticism. But they are, and as we look forward to a new American administration, it is my hope that we can get off on a much better foot than the last one did in the region when they canceled the missile defense installations intended for those countries, squandering an opportunity to link them more closely to us.

I have to say I am encouraged in this department by the activities of the President-elect, particularly in terms of the congratulatory phone call he received last week from the President of the Republic of China, Tsai Ing-wen. The liberal foreign policy elites were, of course, shocked and appalled. How, they wonder, could the President-elect have committed such an appalling gaff? Wasn't he aware we had degraded our relationship with Taiwan for more than 35 years and no longer recognized this friendly, prosperous, and democratic country as a nation state? Compounding their consternation was the concern that the People's Republic of China might not like it. Quelle horreur. The Chinese might not like it.

Now, to be fair, given the flaming train wreck that is the Obama foreign policy writ large, our relationship with the PRC is, by comparison, a bright spot. All they have done is throw Mr. Obama's successor as Nobel Peace lau-

reate, Liu Xiaobo, into prison, constructed 3,000 acres of weaponized artificial islands in the middle of one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, and utterly failed to contain North Korea, while dismantling the last vestiges of freedom in Hong Kong. Even so, I don't think our President-elect needs to clear his phone calls with Beijing. The phone call between President Tsai and the new American President was, in fact, an acknowledgement of a simple truth: that Taiwan has become an important friend to the United States, even after Jimmy Carter downgraded them in 1979 in acknowledgement of the "One China" policy the elites are so eager to perpetuate.

That is another thing. Just because a policy is old doesn't make it sacrosanct. I don't think anyone here can honestly say our relations with the PRC is so fantastic that we shouldn't do anything to rock the boat. I don't think the Carter-era foreign policy was such a success that we should unquestionably continue it.

I hope the President-elect continues to make clear that while he understands the importance of China and looks forward to a positive relationship with Beijing, he is not going to ignore our friends in the region.

The call between President Tsai and the President-elect reminded me of another phone call which took place in September of 2013. At the end of that year's United Nations General Assembly in New York, while driving to the airport, the new President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hasan Ruhani, took out his cell phone and called President Obama. The Obama administration was in a tizzy of excitement over Mr. Ruhani's election, as they believed him to be a "moderate" who would be a good-faith partner in their planned and hoped-for negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. Even at this early day, the signs were not promising. Despite Mr. Obama's offers, President Ruhani had refused to have a face-to-face meeting at the United Nations, opting for a call instead. There were no preconditions placed on this first direct exchange between an Iranian and American leader since 1979, such as, say, demanding that the Iranians release their American hostages and acknowledging Israel's right to exist—steps that would have indicated a fundamental shift in Iran's virulent hostility to the United States and our allies and suggested we were truly on a new path.

We all know what has happened over the last 3 years as the Obama administration made concession after concession to get a deal—any deal—with Tehran. Even as Iranian belligerence and hostility had grown, as they have tested ballistic missiles, violated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, detained our citizens, and repeatedly threatened to wipe Israel off the map, Mr. Obama has over and over again proffered his hand in friendship, even sending them \$1.7 billion in cash as a

sweetener, all of which may well result, as I said earlier, in a terrible threat to the United States that could dwarf Pearl Harbor.

In closing, I want to leave you with a message of hope. Our friendship with Japan, as well as Germany, Israel, the Czech Republic, and Poland, makes me hopeful. There is a discrete reason these nations are now aligned allies: the persistence and resolve of American leadership—leadership to discern moral from immoral, freedom from tyranny, right from wrong, life from death, and then to fight for the right. Such leadership has been sorely lacking in the past 8 years. Yet the past month affords ample reason for hope.

Quite frankly, I think talking to President Tsai and not to President Ruhani was a material improvement for the national security interests of the United States, and it demonstrates renewed resolve to once more assume the mantle of leadership. That is enough to make all of us hopeful.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULIVAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 5456

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in a moment, I am going to ask unanimous consent to pass the bipartisan Family First Act, to help the hundreds of thousands of vulnerable children and their parents stay together and make the biggest improvement in child welfare policy in decades and decades in America.

Right now, Federal policy says taxpayer money can be used to split families apart and uproot the family home. With Families First, our bipartisan bill, terrific work has been done by so many Members on both sides of the aisle. Senator BENNET was here and gave an eloquent address about how important this is. With Chairman HATCH, Chairman GRASSLEY, and Chairman BRADY, this has been a bipartisan effort for months for a number of Members for close to 3 years.

With our reform, the Family First bill, families will finally see that they will get some assistance to stay together and stay together when it is safe to do so. If a parent can get a leg up with some help if they face a drug addiction or a mental health problem, everybody wins because the family stays together.

A grandparent can step in. One of the things I am proudest of is that I wrote the kinship care law as part of welfare reform when I was a new Member of this body. So we know that there are hundreds of thousands of grandparents out there who could step in in those situations, or an uncle, and they could get a little bit of help raising a young-

ster, again, keeping the family together.

Sometimes foster care is lifesaving. I think all of us have said that from the beginning. But it should not be the only option. That is what kids who have been in the foster care system came to the Senate this week to tell us. It is our job as policymakers to protect the most vulnerable. Those kids don't have a powerful lobby. They don't have deep pockets.

It just seems to me, as we wrap up this session and everyone here goes back to their families and their holidays, that it is not in good conscience to turn our backs on the foster kids and allow this important bipartisan legislation to wither and to die in the last days of the 114th Congress.

So in a moment I will make this unanimous consent request. I ask that our colleagues end this standing in the way of providing a new measure of hope for vulnerable kids and their families and that we help lift the weight of this broken status quo—this broken status quo that falls heaviest on the hundreds of thousands of foster kids living in a quiet struggle every single day.

So at this time, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 527, H.R. 5456; that the Wyden substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no interviewing action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I was wondering if I could direct a question through the Chair to the Senator from West Virginia. I was curious as to whether or not the good Senator, my friend and colleague, intends to object to this measure.

Mr. MANCHIN. To this measure? No, sir.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I actually think Senator WYDEN has done some good work on this measure. I hope that we can get to a point where we can bridge the gap and address some concerns that some of the Members have in States that are concerned with unintended consequences. But at this time, and for reasons unrelated to this measure but to our inability to get other unanimous consents through, I am going to have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I will be very brief. As I have indicated to our colleague from North Carolina—and he is new to the Senate—he really brings a refreshing openness to these debates. I know this was a new topic for him. He has not had a chance to hear a lot about it over the last few years. He was concerned about what this would mean

to group facilities and group homes in his State.

I said: Look, if there is a problem in North Carolina in terms of trying to meet these measures, we said we will give States more time. We will give them more flexibility. I would just like to point out that there seems to be enormous support across North Carolina with respect to this bill because in North Carolina they seem to be saying that they understand that what this legislation is all about—what Family First is all about—is just getting high-quality care for these youngsters.

All of the providers would be eligible. It does not speak to the type of provider. It is all the providers. So I am just going to wrap up by a few quotes that came into the Finance Committee over the course of this legislation. From the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services, which, as I understand, is the association of entities that administer child welfare programs in the State of North Carolina supports the legislation, we have a letter that reads: "We go on record as supporting the act and respectfully request your support in passing this important legislation."

The North Carolina Association of Social Workers supports the bill. They wrote: "The legislation would strengthen families so that more children could remain safely with their parents and family caregivers and avoid the need for foster care." For the overwhelming majority of children, this North Carolina group says: This legislation could be a lifesaver.

The North Carolina Pediatric Society writes:

The bill is a pivotal opportunity for a major Federal policy shift away from placing children in out-of-home care and toward keeping families together. Congregate care remains one of the options on the continuum, and the bill doesn't impose time limits or restrictions on the use of these settings for children who need them. But the focus is on keeping families together. The only changes this bill makes for congregate care providers is raising the standards for quality so that all children-needs settings benefit from the therapeutic value of the best providers, of which we have several in North Carolina.

So the Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Children's Hope Alliance, the Exchange Family Center, Family Preservation Community Services, and FIRST North Carolina—a number of groups, all based there and serving in North Carolina citizens—have come out for this.

So I recognize that there has been an objection. It is my intention to keep working through the night, through the early part of tomorrow. I appreciate that this Senator from North Carolina has kept an open mind on this. He has indicated in our conversations that he understands that there is a lot of good in this bill, and for the reasons he has stated, he cannot support it tonight and I gather reasons unrelated to the bill.

I look forward to working with him. He has come to the Senate fairly recently, but I have found him open and

accessible. That is all you can ask of a colleague.

With that I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Oregon. I may be new to the Senate, but I am not new to North Carolina. I was speaker of the house for 4 years, and I worked with a lot of the agencies that the Senator from Oregon referenced. But the fact of the matter is that the first time I heard that these agencies supported the bill was about 90 seconds ago.

This has not been fully vetted in the Senate. It sounds like it has a lot of merit, but even having said that, this is not why I am objecting to the bill. I am objecting at this time, in large part, because of a number of other objections we are receiving that are not allowing things that would otherwise move through unanimous consent.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2912

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, on that note, I ask unanimous consent that the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2912, the Trickett Wendler Right to Try Act of 2016, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I will continue to object to any unanimous consent on legislation until the CR includes a permanent long-term solution for our miners' health care, as included in the Miners Protection Act, S. 3470.

So this is something that we have been talking about and working on for 2 years. That is all we have asked: Fulfill our promises as those representative of people who have given everything. So I will have to object for these reasons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate that, but the reason I directed the question about the objection to the motion of the Senator from Oregon is that there seems to be maybe selective application of a strategy that the Senator from West Virginia is trying to do to get a measure passed.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3084

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, if I may move on. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 695, S. 3084, the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be withdrawn, the Gardner substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the

motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we have heard a lot of talk during the election, since the election about communities like my hometown of Mansfield, OH, not far from where the Presiding Officer grew up—communities that have been ignored by their representatives in Washington.

A lot of politicians responded during the election, since the election. They pledged to do better. This is our chance to actually show that we mean it—with the work that Senator MANCHIN has done, and Senator CASEY, Senator WARNER, Senator PORTMAN in my State, a Republican, and Senator DONNELLY of Indiana—simply to take care of these mine workers.

Senator MANCHIN has been on this floor, as I have—but he has been on this floor even more times—talking about taking care of those mine workers, living up to the promise that Harry Truman made, extending their health insurance.

Instead, the only offer we have had from the majority leader, the one person—Senator TILLIS is not standing in the way. Senator SULLIVAN is not standing in the way. It is one Senator—the majority leader. For whatever reason he does not like the United Mine Workers union. I don't really care about what he thinks about the union. I support the union.

But I care about these workers. What they proposed is a 4-month extension, which means these workers, these widows, these retired workers got a notice back in the last couple of weeks saying they were going to lose their health care. We do 4 months, and they will get another notice—Senator MANCHIN, right?—in January.

We are going to make these retired mine workers, these widows who saw their husbands die from an accident in a mine or died from black lung disease or died from heart diseases every 3 months get another notice and then say: Well, we will extend it for 4 months. No, we have to make sure that we provide them—this is not giving them—the health insurance they have earned.

It is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do. For one Senator, who happens to be from Kentucky, of all places, who happens to also be the majority leader, to stand in the way—Senator WYDEN is on my committee and Senator HATCH, Senator PORTMAN, Senator TOOMEY.

We passed 18-to-8 a bipartisan bill to move forward on this and do this right. Senator MCCONNELL asked to go through regular order. We have to do this right. Yet we are going to go home for Christmas. We are going to go home for the holidays. Whether you celebrate Christmas or not, we are going home for the holidays.

We are going to have fun with our families. These widows, these retired miners, well, it is not so much fun with their families because they don't know when their health insurance is going to run out.

Mr. President, we need to do this. We need to do it right. We need to do it today or tomorrow. We have no business going home before that. For these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Ohio. I believe, if I have the facts correct, that it was the majority leader who pushed for the patch into the CR.

I am not quite sure I agree with some of the specifics that were put forth by the distinguished Senator from Ohio, but I would like to move on.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2763

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 654, S. 2763, the Holocaust Expropriated Art Recovery Act of 2016, with a committee-reported substitute amendment. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a crisis facing 16,000 retired coal miners and widows across the country. We made promises. Roughly 1,000 of these people are in my State. These retirees will lose their health insurance at the end of this year unless Congress acts.

My colleagues, Senators MANCHIN, BROWN, CASEY, and WARNER have spoken on this topic, and together, along with a larger bipartisan group, we pushed for months for the passage of the Miners Protection Act to guarantee pension and health benefits to hundreds of thousands of retirees.

We have a responsibility to enact this legislation to ensure that the Federal Government makes good on its promise—its promise to the miners. It wasn't a suggestion. It was a promise to these people who risked their lives to help our country meet our energy needs. In fact, many of us stood here together in June calling for action before it was too late.

Well, now it is almost too late. While Congress is in a rush to get out of town, those 16,000 retirees are desperate for help. Their health needs are not dependent on our schedule. Their desire to be able to stay alive shouldn't be subject to our desire to leave town. They are praying this legislation is enacted so the health insurance is still there next month when they still need it.

It is inexcusable. It is beyond disappointing to learn that the bill we are set to consider to keep the Federal Government running includes only a scaled-down provision for our miners. Rather than guarantee the promised benefits, leadership chose only to include the bare minimum of a 4-month extension of health coverage through April without addressing the pension concerns.

I have seen leadership. That is not it. I will repeat once again: 16,000 mining retirees, 1,000 from Indiana, will lose their health coverage in 3 weeks unless Congress acts. For the health and the financial security of thousands of families, immediate attention is required. Kicking the can down the road for 4 months has never been a solution. Enrollment periods for other health plans end this week and next. These retirees are watching us closely and are already in the process of making painful and costly decisions.

This is about life and death for thousands of retirees across the country right now. They are praying that we will stand up and keep our word. We made a promise. The United States made a promise to our citizens, to our coal miners. The provision in the spending bill does not come close to meeting that promise that was made.

I urge the Senate to act immediately to consider a stronger measure that addresses this crisis facing thousands of retirees in my State and in so many other States across the country. These are not just numbers. These are our citizens. These are the people we represent. These are the people who dug the coal to keep the lights on in this building. Their ancestors dug the coal that helped win the war in World War II. We made a promise, and here we stand making a decision whether it will be kept or whether it will not.

This is about who we are as a country and who we are as Senators. Do we honor the word of the people before us?

Do we honor the coal miners with black lung, with broken kneecaps, with broken shoulders, with widows who are wondering if they are going to be able to make it alone?

I will continue to object to any unanimous consent request or legislation until the CR includes a permanent long-term solution for our miners' health care as included in the Miners Protection Act, S. 3470. Therefore, Mr. President, for these reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, let me direct a question through the Chair to the Senator from Indiana.

I don't believe the Senator was in at the time that the Senator from Oregon offered his motion. Would the Senator have objected to that motion—Senator WYDEN's motion?

Mr. DONNELLY. I was not here to listen to what he said. I was elsewhere. So I cannot answer the question because I didn't hear what the Senator had to say.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3364

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of S. 3364, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to accept the donation of facilities and related improvements for use by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to explain why we are here and what is really happening, so people have a good grasp of things.

First of all, the Miners Protection Act—this protection act basically goes back to a commitment, a promise, and a transaction that we have done in Congress in 1946, under President Harry Truman. It is the Krug act. Basically, it was said that from that day forward, we are basically taking certain amounts of money from all the coal that is mined. This is not public funds. We are not asking for public funds. If we had done what we were supposed to do, we would have taken that money and put that money in the funds for the miners' protection of their health and their pension. They had nothing before that. They are the ones who basically gave us the energy that we had to win two world wars and become the super power of the West. All they asked for was that. It wasn't guaranteed by taxpayers going to pay it. It was going to come from the coal that was mined.

Now this same Congress comes back 20, 30 years later, and we changed the bankruptcy laws to allow companies now to declare bankruptcy and to shed their legacy costs. They don't have to pay it no more. So we are caught. Every promise we made now is this: Oh, I am sorry; we can't pay you.

So we did step in. We stepped in a couple of times—in 1993, in 2006. Congress has basically a history with this piece of legislation. So we are working now to shore it up.

AML means abandoned mine lands. That is money that goes from every kind of coal into a reclamation fund that takes care of any reclamation that is needed from the mining process. As you are putting the mines back or putting the environment back and taking the environment and putting the land back, that money would be used for that. If there was not much reclamation or if that money accumulated, then we have a surplus. We have only asked for the surplus.

So we were all on the same page, and we have been negotiating back and forth. This is 2 years ago and up until present. We have been negotiating back and forth, up to 2 weeks ago. Two

weeks ago we were told, and I have had good, honest, upfront negotiations with the majority leader. He said: I just don't think the pension is going to fly this year. I said: I understand it. I am still going to work my tail off for this thing.

I had to tell all the widows and all the people whom we represent—16,300 who were notified in October. They have to give a 90-day notification that you are going to lose your health care benefits. They gave that notification in October for December 31. That happened. I had to tell them now that we are not going to get the pension this year. We are doing everything we can, but I am almost positive we are going to get the health care because I was told we were going to get the health care. Not until 2 days ago did I have any inkling that now, all of a sudden—I am not blaming my colleagues here—the House said: Oh, I am sorry. We are only going to do an extension for the CR—the same extension for the health care.

I know that my colleagues would agree with this. Let's say it was your aunt or your grandmother or a retired person basically being paid those benefits. They were told in October. Now we are supposed to accept this CR coming over with this language that says: Ok, now let's tell Mrs. Smith again. We are basically going to say: OK, we gave you a 4-month extension, but we are going to notify you again in January that you are going to lose it again in April. They don't even have time to work with the deductibles to get any insurance—nothing.

Let me tell you how they were going to pay for it. This is what came from the House—not my colleagues here but from the House. The House says: OK, we are going to take \$47 million from the VEVA transfers. VEVA was money that was set aside for other bankruptcies. These were bankruptcies that were basically going to give people who were retired under those bankruptcies at least health care coverage until June. Those same people are going to lose theirs because it is going to take their money and they are going to lose theirs also. It is almost incomprehensible that they would give us something like this and think it is something we could do.

We got a bipartisan agreement here on this side, and we can't get just a consideration from our colleagues over in the House. So I just can't explain it. I can't go home and explain this. We are walking out of here, trying to get out this weekend because everybody wants to go home. That is wonderful. The only thing we have this time certain is December 31. They know they are going to lose everything—their health care benefits. It is in doubt that they will have their pensions taken care of, and we won't stay here because it is too much of an inconvenience. That is why we are prepared. We are going to stay. If they want to stay through Christmas, fine—through the

New Year, fine. I think that they think: I know everybody wants to go home; so I am sure everybody will fold their hands and leave.

I want to thank all of you and all of my colleagues for jumping up here because you all have been helping us. They just have to get the message that we are sincere about helping these people.

Everybody is standing for the working person. Every campaign ad I saw this year said: We are all for the working man and the working woman. Well, you got a chance to prove it right now. You got a chance to show that I am for you, that I respect what you did, what your husband did, what your family has done for the country, and I am trying to help you.

What we are asking for is to give us a permanent long-term solution for the miners, included in the Miners Protection Act that we have been working on for so long, S. 3470. Reluctantly, therefore, for these reasons, I have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TILLIS. Objection?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Thank you, Mr. President.

The Senator from West Virginia, I believe, is trying to make a compelling argument. I understand that he feels very strongly about this. We feel very strongly about a number of these motions I am going to continue to make and hopefully not get objection.

Mr. President, I do want to remind the Senator from West Virginia that it was the majority leader who worked to at least get the patch in the CR, and like so many things around here, we wish we were working on longer horizons, but that seems to be the challenge we have to deal with and that we will have to deal with in the waning days of this session.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1831

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 1831, the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the Toomey substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I am a bit incredulous. I like the Senator from North Carolina. We sit across from each other in the Veterans' Affairs Committee. We have done at least 2 or 3 bills that reached the President's desk and were signed into law together.

But I think my Republican friends are kind of missing the point here—to give the majority leader credit for fix-

ing this when, No. 1, he wouldn't do it, he wouldn't do it, he wouldn't do it, he wouldn't do it. Senator MANCHIN has asked him for weeks and months and months to take care of the pension and the health insurance, and the majority leader refused month after month after month.

The majority leader said: I need you to do several things. We need you to follow regular order. We did. We went through the Finance Committee, 18 to 8. Senator HATCH, the chairman, helped us. Senator WYDEN, the ranking member, was one of the strongest supporters, joined by Senators CASEY and WARNER, Finance Committee members who represent a lot of mine workers.

The Senate majority leader then said: You have to find a way to pay for it. We did it. We found a way to pay for it. It comes from the abandoned mine fund. There are no tax dollars involved in this. The majority leader still wouldn't do anything.

So finally, Senator MANCHIN comes to the floor, I come to the floor, Senator CASEY comes to the floor, and Senator WARNER comes to the floor over and over, and we say we are not going to agree to anything until you take care of these pensioners, until you take care of these miners' widows. Then, out of the goodness of the majority leader's heart, he gives these miners—these retired miners and widows—4 months. What does 4 months mean?

It means that these widows and miners—these retired miners and widows got a notice in the last couple of weeks saying their insurance will expire December 31. If we agree to the majority leader's bountiful offer, then they will get another notice in January or February saying: Oh, it is going to run out again in 4 months.

What is really interesting around here is, I hear Republican Senators day after day after day—whether it is the Affordable Care Act, whether it is Dodd-Frank—say: All we want is predictability. We want to be able to plan. Businesses can't produce jobs, can't create jobs, unless we have a path forward, unless we can predict what will happen, unless we can have some certainty.

That is all right for corporate America. They want certainty. Corporate America wants to be able to plan. But it is not all right for mine workers' widows? It is OK to jack them around—pardon my language—it is OK for them to stumble around every 4 months and we renew their pensions, we renew their health care? Really.

This is so easy. Give us a year, and then we will be back next year and we will work on this. But, as Senator MANCHIN said, for us to go home for Christmas—whether or not you celebrate Christmas—and be with our families, which I really want to do—I have five grandchildren. I can't wait to get to spend time with them in the next 3 weeks. But we have to do our job. If we don't do it tonight, then we are going to be here tomorrow. If we don't do it

tomorrow, we are going to be here the next day. If we don't do it at the end of this week, we are going to be here next week because we are not leaving. We are going to stay here as long as we need to, even if it means a session on Christmas Day, in order to get these retirees and their widows the pensions and the health care that they earned, not a little 4-month bump.

Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, earlier the distinguished Senator from Oregon said he recognizes that I am new to the Senate and there may be something different between what we would call a blanket position in the North Carolina House and a blanket position here.

Mr. President, I want to ask a question of the distinguished Senator from Ohio. I might add that I appreciate the kind comments that I think you were recently reported as saying. We are working together on veterans issues, and I look forward to continuing to work for you.

Mr. President, I would ask the Senator from Ohio, if he was in the Chamber at the time of the motion offered by Senator WYDEN, would he have been prepared to object to that motion being consistent with the position that they are having blanket objections to all motions?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President—Senator TILLIS, I heard the tail end of it. I was in the cloakroom trying to find out exactly what the parliamentary procedure was going to be on this. I would be willing to say yes to a lot of these once we take care of the mine workers. This is a wide-open forum. Let's take care of the mine workers, and then we can consider each of these other bills. But none of these bills has the immediacy of thousands of mine workers, retirees, and their widows in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana. None of them have the immediacy of these mine workers' health care being cut off December 31.

These are important public initiatives. I can't think of anything that we are considering—I mean, I really want to get "Buy American" in the WRDA bill. We had it in the Senate bill. It was bipartisan.

Speaker RYAN—even though we tweeted the President-elect of the United States asking him to weigh in on "Buy American," saving thousands of dollars in Coshocton, OH, in Wheeling, and in other places all over this country, we couldn't get any response to that. I want to see us do that. I would like to stay and do that, but the immediate question is, How do we protect these miners and retirees and how do we protect these widows and widowers, for that matter, make sure their health care is protected? That is the fundamental question. I am willing to do a whole lot of other things. Do this first, and then the floor is open to do other things.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3286

Mr. TILLIS. In a moment, I will be making another unanimous consent request. I will give a classic example of the kinds of things I wish we could get done before we leave here.

The unanimous consent request I am about to make would encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the U.S. military, with annual Presidential awards to private sector employers recognizing such efforts for their purposes.

This is an example of something that right now, today, without objection, we can get through.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3286, a bill to encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the U.S. military, with annual Presidential awards to private sector employers recognizing such efforts, which was received from the House. I further ask consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, first, I say to my good friend from North Carolina, Mr. TILLIS, I have been in the Senate for 6 years, so I have never used this procedure—never believed it, never thought I would have to, never thought anything would be so direly needed that I would even have to stand here and object to all the good things we both have worked on. I have so many good things on my side that I am not moving right now, and you have so many great things on your side that I would love to help you with.

But, sir, if you were in my position—let me go a little bit further because I don't think maybe I made it. If you want to add insult to injury to what has happened to our retired miners and all the people dependent on their health care benefits, the \$47 million that I told you they transferred—that is what they are going the pay for from the House, the VEBA—basically takes it from other bankrupt funds that were set aside. They are going to do that, and when all is said and done—and it has even been scored that Medicaid and Medicare would save so much because now they are paying for it out of the miners health care fund, and they are not going to have to. But on top of that, from the \$47 million they took, they are going to make \$2 million profit returned back to the Treasury. They are going to take \$2 million from money set aside to pay—that the bankruptcy courts put aside to pay miners because they will lose their health care

by June. Now they are going to lose it by April, by this provision that has been passed by the House. And on top of that, they will have \$2 million in surplus.

I had a lady call me today. She said: You know, Senator MANCHIN, where I come from, they call that theft. They call that theft. And why would you all let them do that? If they don't do anything, some of our miners are, till June—16,000 of us lose. We don't want to punish them, but now you are punishing them. You are punishing them an extra 3 months. Why would you all do that?

I am not sure they really realize it on the other side.

Like I said, I am not at our colleagues here, my friends and Republican colleagues I have here, but why would the House send that to you, and why would you all accept it?

That is all we are asking for. We can all gather forces here and send a large message to them that we are not going to do this until they come to their senses and take care of the miners' health care benefits.

You know what. We can come back. We can let all of this—all of our UCs that have been worked on and that I think are so needed can go right through, we can all go home, and hopefully our miners know they have health care, we know we have done a lot of good for a lot of people, and hopefully everyone will have a better Christmas. So all I am asking for—until the CR includes that permanent, long term, I am going to have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from North Carolina.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—SENATE
RESOLUTION

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of a Senate resolution at the desk designating December 17, 2016, as "Wreaths Across America Day," submitted earlier today. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object. We can keep doing this. I think it is very clear what Senator MANCHIN and I are asking for. We are not asking for anything unusual; we are asking for the Senate to honor the pledge made by President Truman more or less seven decades ago to take care of the health care that mine workers earned.

Don't ever forget, we all work around here. We wear coats and ties, and our work might be stressful, sort of, but we are not likely risking our lives, we are not likely picking up occupational diseases from the work we do. But we are

saying to these widows and mine workers and retired mine workers that I guess you don't matter very much because we are going to have our Christmas vacation and you are going to have to worry about your health care.

Their health care runs out December 31. Senator MCCONNELL, finally, after great pressure from constituents and mine workers and us, finally said he would give us 4 months. You can't run your life not knowing your health insurance is going to run out in 4 months or 8 months or 3 months.

So we shouldn't keep repeating ourselves, but Senator TILLIS keeps bringing up one issue after another. We are going to keep saying no until we get in this bill much more time for this health care for these retired mine workers and their families and their widows.

Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I just want to be clear that my friend from West Virginia, whom I actually consider to be one of my favorites, to be honest with you, since I have been here—I have loved serving with him on committees, and I serve with him on the Senate Armed Services Committee and Veterans' Affairs. I asked the Senator from West Virginia if he would have objected to the motion set forth by the Senator from Oregon, Mr. WYDEN, and the answer was no. So we have an inconsistency here.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—SENATE
RESOLUTION

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of a Senate resolution at the desk honoring the individuals who lost their lives in the tragic fire in Oakland, California, on December 2, 2016, submitted earlier today. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to explain to my good friend, the Senator from North Carolina, that I have been deferring to you the pleasure of objecting, and that is the reason I didn't object to the Senator from Oregon. As you said, we can stay here. I think we all have a lot of appreciation for the situation.

With that being said, we have come to an impasse that if we cannot get the House, with the help of our Senate colleagues on both sides, to agree to a permanent, long-term fix and a solution for the miners' health care—and I would say to the Senator, we took off the pension; you heard me say that. We took the pensions off of that. We thought that might provide us a way to move forward. We thought we had a way to move forward.

With that being said, we stand here today objecting to things that we would all like to move forward on. It pains all of us to be in this position. Hopefully, you all can help us, talking to the House and basically asking them to come to their senses and, hopefully, take care of this.

So for that reason, until we have a long-term solution for our miners' health care as included in the Miners Protection Act, S. 3470, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I would like to direct another question through the Chair to the Senator from West Virginia. I just want to be clear that, hypothetically, if the Senator from Oregon were to come back to the Chamber and offer that motion, would the Senator from West Virginia actually object to that motion?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the Senator posing a question?

Mr. BROWN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, we may have that opportunity.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—SENATE
RESOLUTION

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of a Senate resolution at the desk recognizing the 75th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the lasting significance of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day submitted earlier today. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I was incredulous at the beginning of the night, not quite believing that Senator McConnell—I don't know what he is doing now—was sending his people to the floor and finding ways to push back against the mine workers in West Virginia and Ohio and Pennsylvania and Indiana and Virginia, not willing to help those pensioners and widows. Now we have this incredible coincidence that the last two resolutions—we are talking about mine workers—retired mine workers' health care; we are talking about widows of mine workers who have either died on the job or died perhaps from an illness that mine workers so often have—brown lung or some kind of heart disease. Instead, my friend from North Carolina has offered two resolutions, one to honor people who died in a fire—a tragedy—and one to mark the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, both reasonable things. But they are not resolutions to provide college to the children of the people who died in the fire, and they are not to increase benefits for the grandchildren of people who died in Pearl Harbor; they are resolu-

tions that don't mean anything except they are nice. I am for these resolutions. I love to support anything we do to say something nice and pat somebody on the back. But we have these two resolutions saying aren't they nice, aren't we nice, compared to taking care of widows who are going to see their health care expire on December 31. I don't understand the equivalency.

I suppose we could go all night if Senator McConnell were perhaps in his office or perhaps out to dinner or perhaps he went home. But it is ordering or asking or however we do things around here—Senators come to the floor and delay and delay and delay and try to change the subject so that people forget about these mine workers. Well, we are not going to let the Presiding Officer or Senator Tillis or Senator McConnell or Senator Cornyn or anybody else—we are not going to let you forget the mine workers. We are going to keep talking about this.

I don't mind working late tonight. I don't mind working late tomorrow. I would rather not work until December 24, but Senator Manchin said he will, and I will. My wife is not thrilled about it, and my children and my grandkids aren't thrilled about it. But these are thousands of people who are going to lose their health insurance on December 31, and all that Senator McConnell can do, after huge pressure from mine workers around the country and his constituents in Kentucky and from us—all Senator McConnell can do is say, well, we can give you maybe 4 months, and that is supposed to satisfy us. It doesn't matter if it satisfies us; it matters that we take care of these retired mine workers and their widows.

For all of those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Ohio did mention a couple of resolutions, but I would add there was also the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act that we worked very hard on to provide much needed resources for a number of States, including Ohio. There are a number of other items, including I think hiring vets, providing programs or providing preferences and trying to do everything we can to get our veterans hired; preventing animal cruelty and torture I think is a worthwhile cause, and a number of other things.

But, again, the point here is that we are trying to move things that we generally have consent on, and for one reason or another—and I don't question the motives of the Senator from West Virginia—they are being held up. We kind of have a double standard in that some of these things do not rise to the same level as the unanimous consent request made by Senator Wyden earlier.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 5456

So I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 527, H.R. 5456; that the Wyden substitute amend-

ment at the desk be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BROWN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

The Senator from North Carolina is recognized.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I am happy to yield the floor to the Senator from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina yields the floor to the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. I just want to clarify. I think there is some confusion. It seems like everybody is in a hustle right now. I think they think we are being selective. I want to make it very clear. I have been very clear to everybody. I have had to object on everything. I have had to object on my own pieces of legislation to stop everything. With that being said, I think I was asked about Senator Wyden's request, and I said, no, I wouldn't at that time, and then I think at that time Senator Tillis objected. For that you were asked did I object, and I said no.

With that being said, I would have objected to everything, and I think everybody knew where I stood in this body that I will and have to reluctantly—I don't want to be in this position. I am so committed to fulfilling the promise and commitment we have made. That is all.

I am sorry if there has been confusion. I have to, for the position we have taken. I think the good fight that we have here—and, basically, what the House has done to us is not humane to the people we represent. That is all I said. I am sorry for that.

So if there is a motion on the table, I object to that too.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Reserving the right to object, but I withdraw my reservation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in 1922, Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman to sit in the U.S. Senate. She served in this body for only 1 day, but

during those 24 hours she made a bold prediction for her time about the future role women would play in the Senate. She said: "When the women of the country come in and sit with you . . . you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness." I will second that.

BARBARA and I served together in the House—and we have served together in the Senate for 20 years. And let me tell you, no one embodies Senator FELTON's prediction better than BARBARA BOXER.

Throughout the years, I have loved getting to know BARBARA as a colleague, but more importantly as a friend. Loretta and I joined BARBARA and her husband, Stu, on official trips, personal vacations and countless dinners. We have eaten, drank, joked, and bonded. And as her career in the Senate comes to an end, keeping those bonds of friendship strong as she heads west is one my life goals.

BARBARA made quite an impact on the Senate Chamber before she even entered this body. On October 9, 1991, the Senate Judiciary Committee was set to vote on the nomination of Justice Clarence Thomas to serve a lifetime appointment on the U.S. Supreme Court, without listening to Professor Anita Hill's allegations of sexual harassment. At the time, there were two women in the Senate, BARBARA MIKULSKI and Nancy Landon Kassebaum. Now, while this was going on in the Senate, the women of the House tried speaking out in that body. They were censured. And they had enough. So they marched out of the House and over to the Senate—29 women House Members, led by Congresswoman Pat Schroeder from Colorado and BARBARA BOXER from California. American politics has never been the same.

The following year, a number of esteemed women were elected to the U.S. Senate. Several reporters deemed 1992: "the Year of the Woman." Senator MIKULSKI, the dean of women, as she is often referred to, said: "Calling 1992 the Year of the Woman makes it sound like the Year of the Caribou or the Year of the Asparagus. We're not a fad, fancy or a year." She was right. But California made history. For the first time, one State sent two women to represent them in the Senate: DIANNE FEINSTEIN and BARBARA BOXER.

BARBARA often reminds me of the line from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "Though she be but little, she is fierce." In 1994, when Republicans took control of Congress, one of the first things they did was go after environmental regulations, including rules to limit the amount of arsenic in the drinking water. BARBARA immediately launched a good, old-fashioned, 3-day "Ms. Smith Goes to Washington" filibuster. And like most of the fights she takes on, she won.

BARBARA is a call-it-as-you-see-it kind of person. Maybe it is because she grew up in the no-nonsense, working-

class town of Brooklyn. Or maybe it is because her parents and Jewish grandparents, who immigrated to this country from Russia instilled in her a deep love for America's Constitution and freedoms—a sense of obligation to give something back and a determination to fight for underdogs, truth and justice.

She has sponsored or cosponsored more than 1,200 pieces of legislation and helped lead the fight on issues ranging from women's rights to healthcare to protecting California's natural wonders to keeping lead and other potentially lethal hazards out of children's toys.

The vote that sealed our spiritual kinship took place in October 2002 when she and I voted against the Iraq war resolution. One of our dear friends, Paul Wellstone, also voted against the resolution. Paul was in a tough reelection fight that year. A reporter asked him if it was a hard choice to vote against the war. Paul said it was a risk, but not a choice. His conscience wouldn't let him vote any other way. It seems to me that is how BARBARA BOXER approaches every one of her votes in Congress: It might be a risk, but it is not a choice. She listens to her conscience, and the people of California respect her for it. But let me be clear: that doesn't mean she will not work hard to find a compromise.

She proved that in recent years when she and JIM INHOFE—the unlikelyst of odd couples—worked together to pass important legislation updating regulations on toxic chemicals and shepherding through a surface transportation bill that no one thought could be done.

I will close with this. Early in BARBARA'S political career, people used to come up to her and say: How did you get so strong, how did you get so tough? BARBARA would humbly respond: Oh, not tough. I am just an ordinary person, and I do what I think is right. I agree with most of that, but let me tell you—BARBARA is as tough as they come. She can't be bullied or intimidated, and she never loses her courage. I want to thank BARBARA for sacrificing so much time with her own family to make the families of America safer, healthier, and more hopeful. For that and a thousand other reasons, I will miss her in the Senate. But I know I can count on her to keep pushing those of us who remain to listen to our consciences—to fight for change and do the right thing.

MARKETPLACE FAIRNESS BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this past Thanksgiving marked the beginning of the holiday shopping season.

In an effort to find deeply discounted electronics, toys, and other Christmas gifts for family and friends, bargain-hunting shoppers searched for Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals.

While these deals provided great savings for shoppers, Main Street retailers and States did not reap the same benefits.

Because we have let another year and holiday season come and go without closing the online sales tax loophole, States missed out on millions of dollars in sales tax revenue owed to them from online purchases. And Main Street retailers continued to lose business.

However, this was not without trying.

Around this time last year, Senators ENZI, ALEXANDER, HEITKAMP, and myself opposed the air dropping of legislation in the customs conference report that would have taken away a State's right to collect taxes on accessing the internet unless we gave States the ability to collect taxes on internet sales that were already owed, and we leveled the playing field for brick and mortar businesses.

Despite our opposition, the customs bill passed, and Majority Leader MCCONNELL promised to give us a vote later this year on the Marketplace Fairness Act or similar e-fairness legislation.

This would give House Republicans the opportunity to go through regular order, a process they said was necessary to address the issue.

Yet, unfortunately, here we are, at the end of the Congress, and House Republicans have still refused to act.

The Marketplace Fairness Act levels the playing field for retailers by allowing States to treat brick and mortar retailers the same as remote retailers in the collection of State and local sales and use taxes.

Internet retailers benefit under our current system with a 5-10 percent price advantage over their Main Street competitors.

This is because customers visit local retailers, browse goods, use their phone to take a picture of it, and go online to purchase the item tax-free.

Products sold online seem cheaper when sales taxes are not collected at the point of sale. But they are not because the tax is still owed, though not paid, by the customer.

This is not fair, and it is not right.

Thousands of Main Street businesses have worked hard to grow their businesses, but have become showrooms because of this price advantage, making it difficult, and, in some cases, impossible for them to compete.

I have come to this floor in the past to share the stories of Main Street businesses, such as Play It Again Sports in Naperville and Soccer Plus in Palatine, that have gone out of business due, in large part, to the unfair advantage of their online competitors.

Since then, Sports Authority has met that same fate, and many department stores and big-box retailers have closed a number of stores because of the increase in online shopping.

These are local jobs and community anchors that no longer exist.

There is nothing we can do now for these shuttered retailers. But we can,

and should, still help thousands of retailers avoid the same fate by leveling the playing field for Main Street retailers.

For the first time in history, consumers said they made more of their purchases online than in stores.

This trend is evidenced by an increase in online retail spending, which grew 14.6 percent last year, to \$341 billion, and is projected to reach \$523 billion in 2020.

During the weekend following Thanksgiving—the biggest shopping weekend of the year—online retail spending was over \$9.3 billion, a 16.4 percent increase from 2015.

As online sales increase, the potential sales tax revenue that States lose increases.

The longer we delay in closing this loophole, the longer we perpetuate an uneven playing field between local and online retailers that erodes the revenues needed by State and local governments to fund essential public services.

Despite the looming budget deficits State and local governments are facing and the competitive disadvantage experienced by brick and mortar businesses, House Republicans have refused to address the issue for more than a decade.

This year is no different.

Numerous requests to the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee to markup e-fairness legislation from the ranking member and other bipartisan members on committee, Main Street retailers, State and local governments, labor, and the sponsors of the Marketplace Fairness Act remain unanswered.

Instead, Chairman GOODLATTE drafted his own proposal that created more problems than it solved.

I didn't support the chairman's proposal, but I supported the process and his calls for regular order and encouraged him to work with his colleagues in the House to send us a bill so that we can resolve our differences.

We are still waiting.

The chairman has continued to refuse to work with us on reasonable compromise legislation that didn't turn 100 years of sales and use tax law on its head, even though he doesn't have the support of the majority of the House Republican Caucus on his approach.

It is apparent that these calls for compromise and regular order are nothing more than veiled attempts to delay and obstruct, which have so far been successful.

If Congress continues to ignore this issue and fails to act, the courts will.

Because States are missing out on an estimated \$23 billion a year in potential sales tax revenue, they are looking to the courts for a solution, heeding the call from Supreme Court Justice Kennedy to reexamine the Court's precedent on the issue.

This year alone, 16 States have introduced over 40 sales tax bills, and others have enacted legislation that have triggered legal challenges that would help

States collect sales tax without congressional action.

This week, a Federal court in South Dakota will begin hearing oral arguments on a South Dakota law that requires remote retailers to collect and remit sales tax.

And we may know, as early as next week, if the Supreme Court will grant review of a law Colorado recently enacted that imposes reporting and notification requirements on remote retailers.

Let me be clear. This is not the approach I prefer. I would rather Congress do its job to pass a uniform, comprehensive Federal solution instead of the States moving forward individually so we don't have a patch work of laws that small businesses have to navigate.

But I understand that, in the absence of Congressional action, the States have no other options. They must either raise taxes or cut vital public services if Congress continues to sit on the sidelines.

As you can see, the States are no longer waiting for Congress to get its act together.

But there is still time for us address this issue.

And I hope my colleagues in the House will work with me to do that before it is too late.

ELECT AND FREEING OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE GAMBIA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in recent years, we have seen a troubling trend of democratic backsliding in several parts of the world, including Russia, Thailand, Uganda, Turkey, and Venezuela.

Even some parts of Europe and the United States have seen long established democratic norms challenged in deeply upsetting ways.

So imagine my great surprise late last week when the people of The Gambia peacefully voted for a new democratic government.

Many probably don't know much about The Gambia—a small West African nation whose uniquely odd colonial borders have it straddling the meandering Gambia River almost completely surrounded by Senegal.

Gambia is English speaking—Senegal speaks French—with several local languages shared between the unusual borders.

Some of you may remember The Gambia was the ancestral home in the novel and then-television miniseries "Roots."

Because of its strong ties to the U.S. and geographic location, for some time The Gambia also had a unique distinction of being an emergency landing spot for the Space Shuttle should one need to abort its mission early in the launch phase.

And until 1994, it had the proud distinction of being the longest postcolonial democracy on the African continent.

You see, for the last 22 years, The Gambia was ruled by a regime that

took power in a coup, with troubling arrests and disappearances of journalists, activists, and opposition members.

I and several of my Senate colleagues raised a number of these cases over the years, most notably the 2007 disappearance of journalist Ebrima Manneh—for which I now hope there will finally be a fair and healing accounting.

And yet, last Thursday night, the people of The Gambia, voting with colored marbles placed in different containers to make it easier for illiterate voters, chose a new leader in a peaceful and democratic process.

And outgoing President Yahya Jammeh honorably conceded the election and agreed to a peaceful transfer of power.

He offered to help President-Elect Adama Barrow.

While we have had our differences, I want to acknowledge this important act of leadership and love of country by outgoing President Jammeh.

And not only has there been this notable peaceful transfer of power, but in just the few short days since the election, at least 18 political prisoners have been released from jail, including a key opposition figure.

So to the Gambian people, let me say congratulations on your important demonstration of democracy—a model for the African continent and the world.

I look forward to significantly improved relations between our two nations and working together on a host of shared concerns.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, history is dotted with the stories of trailblazers. People who shape the public discourse at a pivotal moment in time or change the direction of the debate. One of those trailblazers is BARBARA MIKULSKI, the longest serving woman in Senate history, the first woman to represent Maryland in the U.S. Senate, and the first woman to chair the Senate's Appropriations Committee. She is tough. She is direct. She is dedicated. She is a fighter. She is a leader.

BARBARA MIKULSKI has always fought for our families and our children. From her roots as a social worker and community activist to the levels of leadership in the Senate, she has held firm to her adage that she is not just the Senator from Maryland, she is the Senator for Maryland. From her first years in the Senate until now, she has promoted education, nutrition, healthcare, and gender equality in the Senate.

She led our historic efforts to pass the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act—shouting from the rooftops the simple principle that women deserve equal pay for equal work. She continued that legacy with the Paycheck Fairness Act. Wouldn't it be a fitting tribute if the Senate considered and approved that commonsense legislation before she retires?

Like others in this Chamber, she was a vocal and steadfast supporter of Violence Against Women Act and our most recent efforts to reauthorized and expand those lifesaving programs. She led the efforts to ensure that the Affordable Care Act made clear that no one should be discriminated against in preventive care. Who can forget her fierce advocacy to make the letter of the law clear that being a woman is not a pre-existing condition?

And when BARBARA assumed the mantle chairing the Appropriations Committee, she brought with her the tough but fair grit that has been her hallmark in the Senate. When asked about earmarks, her retort was simple: "I've told senators that if you're opposed to earmarks, I'll honor that and won't include any for your state." You always know where you stand with BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Thirty years ago, when she first came to the Senate, women filled just two seats in this body. When the Senate convenes next year, there will be 21. I hope it won't be another 30 years for the Senate to be truly representative of the country we serve.

A lifelong Baltimore resident, "Senator Barb" has never forgotten her roots, probably because she never left. She remains a Marylander through and through, dedicated to her State and never forgetting that listening to your constituents is the most important job of all. When Senator MIKULSKI announced her retirement, she told her constituents that the question came down to whether she wanted to spend her time "raising money or raising hell to meet your day-to-day needs?" That is BARBARA. This rang through in her farewell speech today to the Senate.

We often talk of the lions of the Senate. BARBARA MIKULSKI ranks among them. I will miss her fierce advocacy, her counsel, her commitment, her tenacity, and her grit. I value her friendship, and we will miss her.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-31, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$3.51 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,
JAMES WORM, Acting Deputy Director,
(For J. W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN,
Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-31

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$2.60 billion.

Other \$.91 billion.

Total \$3.51 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Forty-eight (48) CH-47F Chinook Cargo Helicopters.

One hundred twelve (112) T55-GA-714A Engines (ninety-six (96) installed, sixteen (16) spares).

One hundred sixteen (116) Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) (ninety-six (96) installed, twenty (20) spares).

Fifty-eight (58) AN/AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (forty-eight (48) installed, ten (10) spares).

Forty-eight (48) M240H 7.62mm Machine Guns with spare parts.

Non-MDE: This request also includes the following Non-MDE: M134D Mini-Guns or equivalent type guns with support equipment and training; Aircraft Survivability Equipment (AN/APR-39A(V) 1/4, AN/AVR-2B, AN/ARC-231, AN/ARC-201D, AN/APX-123A, ARN-147 VOR/ILS, ARN-153 TACAN, APN-209, IDM-401 Improved Data Modem, and AN/ARC-220); Infrared Signature Suppression System (IRSS); Fast Rope Insertion Extraction System (FRIES); Extended Range Fuel System (ERPS); Ballistic Armor Protection System; facilities; air worthiness support; spares and repair parts; communications equipment; personnel training and training equipment; site surveys; tool and test equipment; Ground Support Equipment (GSE); repair and return; publications and technical documentation; Quality Assurance Team (QAT); U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (SR-B-ZAG).

(v) Sales Commission. Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex attached.

(vii) Prior Related Case, if any: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 7, 2016.

*as defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—CH-47F Chinook Cargo Helicopters

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has requested a possible sale of:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Forty-eight (48) CH-47F Chinook Cargo Helicopters.

One hundred twelve (112) T55-GA-714A Engines (ninety-six (96) installed, sixteen (16) spares).

One hundred sixteen (116) Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation Systems (EGI) (ninety-six (96) installed, twenty (20) spares).

Fifty-eight (58) AN/AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (forty-eight (48) installed, ten (10) spares).

Forty-eight (48) M240H 7.62mm Machine Guns with spare parts.

Non-MDE: This request also includes the following Non-MDE: M134D Mini-Guns or equivalent type guns with support equipment and training; Aircraft Survivability Equipment (AN/APR-39A(V) 1/4, AN/AVR-2B, AN/ARC-231, AN/ARC-201D, AN/APX-123A, ARN-147 VOR/ILS, ARN-153 TACAN, APN-209, IDM-401 Improved Data Modem, and AN/ARC-220); Infrared Signature Suppression System (IRSS); Fast Rope Insertion Extraction System (FRIES); Extended Range Fuel System (ERPS); Ballistic Armor Protection System; facilities; air worthiness support; spares and repair parts; communications equipment; personnel training and training equipment; site surveys; tool and test equipment; Ground Support Equipment (GSE); repair and return; publications and technical documentation; Quality Assurance Team (QAT); U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The total overall estimated value is \$3.51 billion.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner which has been and continues to be a leading contributor of political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. This sale will increase the Royal Saudi Land Forces Aviation Command's (RSLFAC) interoperability with U.S. forces and convey U.S. commitment to Saudi Arabia's security and armed forces modernization.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The proposed sale of the CH-47F aircraft will improve Saudi Arabia's heavy lift capability. Saudi Arabia will use this enhanced capability to strengthen its homeland defense and deter regional threats. Saudi Arabia will have no difficulty absorbing these aircraft into its armed forces.

The prime contractors will be The Boeing Military Aircraft Company, Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, and Honeywell Aerospace Company, Phoenix, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this sale will require up to sixty (60) U.S. Government and contractor representatives to travel to Saudi Arabia for up to sixty (60) months for equipment de-processing, fielding, system checkout, training, and technical logistics support.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-31

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The CH-47F Chinook Cargo Helicopter is a medium-lift helicopter equipped with the Common Avionics Architecture System (CAAS) cockpit, which provides aircraft system, flight, mission, and communication management systems, five multifunction displays, two general purpose processor units, two control display units and two data concentrator units. The navigation system will have two Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System (GPS/INS), two Digital Advanced Flight Control Systems (DAFCS), one ARN-149 Automatic Direction Finder, one ARN-147 Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Range/Instrument Landing System (VOR/ILS) marker beacon system, one ARN-153 Tactical Airborne Navigation (TACAN) system, two air data computers, and one Radar Altimeter system. The aircraft survivability equipment includes the AN/APR-39A(V)1/4 Radar Signal Detecting Set, and the AN/AAR-57 Common Missile Warning System.

The Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System (GPS/INS) is SECRET. The AN/AAR-57 Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) is CONFIDENTIAL. Releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are SECRET. The AN/APR-39A(V)1/4 Series Radar Detecting Set (RDS) is SECRET. The AN/AVR-2B, Laser Warning Set is CONFIDENTIAL. Releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are SECRET. The AN/ARC-231 (V)(C) is UNCLASSIFIED. The AN/ARC-201D Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System (SINCGARS), performance capabilities, Electronic Countermeasures/Electronic Counter Counter-Measures (ECM/ECCM) specifications and Engineering Change Orders (ECOs) are SECRET. The AN/APX-123A, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) Transponder is UNCLASSIFIED. The AN/ARN-147, Very High Frequency Omni Ranging/Instrument Landing System (VOR/ILS) receiver is UNCLASSIFIED. The AN/ARC-220 is UNCLASSIFIED. The KN-77 is UNCLASSIFIED. The AN/PYQ-10 (C) Simple Key Loader (SKL) is UNCLASSIFIED. The TSEC KY-58 voice secure equipment is CONFIDENTIAL if software fill is installed. The TSEC KY-100 voice secure equipment is used with the FM Command Radio to provide secure two-way communication. It is Communications Security (COMSEC) Equipment and is classified SECRET if software fill is installed. The AN/AVS-6/7(V)1 is UNCLASSIFIED.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems which might reduce weapon system effectiveness.

3. A determination has been made that Saudi Arabia can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-62, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Qatar for de-

fense articles and services estimated to cost \$700 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,
JAMES WORM, Acting Deputy Director
(For J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN,
Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-62

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Qatar.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE)* \$ 0 million.

Other \$700 million.
Total \$700 million.
(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.
Non-MDE includes: Follow-on support for eight (8) C-17 aircraft, to include contract labor for sustainment engineering, on-site COMSEC support, Quality Assurance, support equipment repair, supply chain management, spares replenishment, maintenance, back shop support, and centralized maintenance support/associated services. Required upgrades will include fixed installation satellite antenna, Mode 5+ installation and sustainment, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out, and two special operations loading ramps.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (QAF).
(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: QA-D-QAB.
(vi) Sales Commission. Fee. etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 7, 2016.

* As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Qatar—Continuation of Logistics Support Services and Equipment

The Government of Qatar has requested a possible sale of continued logistics support for eight (8) C-17 aircraft which will include contract labor for sustainment engineering, on-site COMSEC support, Quality Assurance, support equipment repair, supply chain management, spares replenishment, maintenance, back shop support, and centralized maintenance support/associated services. Required upgrades will include fixed installation satellite antenna, Mode 5+ installation and sustainment, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out, and two special operations loading ramps. The estimated total cost is \$700 million.

The proposed sale contributes to the foreign policy and national security of the U.S. by helping to improve the security of an important regional ally. Qatar is a vital partner for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. The C-17 provides a heavy airlift capability and complements the normal, day-to-day operations of the Government of Qatar's C-130J fleet. Qatar will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale will enhance Qatar's ability to operate and maintain its C-17s, supporting its capability to provide humanitarian aid in the Middle East and Africa region and support its troops in coalition operations. Qatar's current contract supporting its C-17 fleet will expire in September of 2017.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be the Boeing Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. The U.S. Government is not aware of any known offsets associated with this sale. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of this sale will require the assignment of approximately five additional U.S. Government and approximately 50 contractor representatives to Qatar.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness, as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-62

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex A Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:
1. This sale will involve the release of sensitive technology to Qatar in the performance of services to sustain eight (8) Qatar C-17 aircraft. While much of the below equipment supporting the C-17 is not new to the country, there will be replenishment spares of the below sensitive technologies purchased to support the fleet.

2. The Force 524D is a 24-channel SAASM based Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, with precise positioning service (PPS) capability built upon Trimble's next generation OPS technology. The Force 524D retains backward compatibility with the proven Force 5GS, while adding new functionality to interface with digital antenna electronics, to significantly improve anti-jam (AJ) performance. The host platform can select the radio frequency (RF) or digital antenna electronics (DAE) interface. In the digital mode, the Force 524D is capable of controlling up to 16 independent beams. The hardware and software associated with the 524D receiver card is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. The C-17 aircraft will be equipped with the GAS-1, which is comprised of the Controlled Reception Pattern Antennas (CRPA), with the associated wiring harness and the Antenna Electronics (AE)-1, to provide AJ capability. The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED.

4. The KIV-77 is the crypto applique for Mode V Identification Friend of Foe (IFF). The hardware is UNCLASSIFIED and COMSEC controlled.

5. Software, hardware, and other data/information, which is classified or sensitive, is reviewed prior to release to protect system vulnerabilities, design data, and performance parameters. Some end-item hardware, software, and other data identified above are classified at the CONFIDENTIAL and SECRET level. Potential compromise of these systems is controlled through management of the basic software programs, of highly sensitive systems and software-controlled weapon systems, on a case-by-case basis.

6. Qatar is both willing and able to protect United States classified military information. Qatari physical and document security standards are equivalent to U.S. standards. Qatar has demonstrated its willingness and capability to protect sensitive military technology and information released to its military in the past.

7. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware or software source code in this proposed sale, the information could be used to develop countermeasures, which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of systems with similar or advanced capabilities. The benefits to be derived from this sale in the furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives, as outlined in the Policy Justification, outweigh the potential damage that could result if the sensitive technology, where revealed to unauthorized persons.

8. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Qatar.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee On Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-61, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Qatar for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$81 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JAMES WORM, Acting Deputy Director
(For J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN,
Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-61

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Qatar.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE)* \$51 million.

Other \$30 million.
Total \$81 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Four (4) F117-PW-100 C17 Engines (spares).

Non-MDE includes: Quick Engine Change (QEC) Kits, Engine Transport Trailers, Engine Platforms, Engine Trailers, and other various support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (LAC).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: QA-D-QAB.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 7, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Qatar—Spare C-17 Engines and Equipment

The Government of Qatar has requested a possible sale of the following in support of its eight (8) C-17 Globemaster III aircraft procured under a Direct Commercial Sale (DCS): four (4) spare F117-PW-100 engines, Quick Engine Change (QEC) Kits, Engine Transport Trailers, Engine Platforms, Engine Trailers, and other various support. The estimated total program cost is \$81 million.

The proposed sale would contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the U.S. by helping to improve the security of an important regional ally. Qatar is a vital partner for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. The C-17 provides a heavy airlift capability and complements the normal, day-to-day operations of Qatar's C-130J fleet. Qatar will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale would enhance Qatar's ability to operate and maintain its C-17s, supporting its capability to provide humanitarian aid in the Middle East and Africa region and support its troops in coalition operations.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be the Boeing Corporation of Chicago, Illinois. The U.S. Government is not aware of any known offsets associated with this sale. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not alter current assignment of additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Qatar. The number of U.S. Government and contractor representatives required in Qatar to support the program will be determined in joint negotiations as the program proceeds through the development, production and equipment installation phases.

There is no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Qatar.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee On Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-52, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Kingdom of Morocco for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$108 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JAMES WORM, Acting Deputy Director
(For J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral, USN,
Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-52

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Kingdom of Morocco.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$101 million.

Other: \$7 million.
Total: \$108 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):
One thousand two-hundred (1,200) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (BGM-71-4B-RF)

Fourteen (14) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (Fly-to-Buy Lot Acceptance Missiles)

Non-MDE includes: U.S. Government and contractor engineering; technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (VTG).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: MO-B-USZ for \$137,034.913 signed on 4 May 2016.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 7, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Morocco—Radio Frequency (RF) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missile (BGM-71-4B-RF and Support)

The Government of Morocco has requested a possible sale of one thousand two-hundred

(1,200) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (BGM-71-413-RF) and fourteen (14) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles (Fly-to-Buy Lot Acceptance Missiles). Also included with this request is U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated MDE sale is \$101 million. The total estimated value is \$108 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for the political stability and economic progress in North Africa. This proposed sale directly supports Morocco and serves the interests of the Moroccan people and the United States.

The proposed sale of TOW 2A Missiles and technical support will advance Morocco's efforts to develop an integrated ground defense capability. Morocco will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractors involved in this program are: Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, Arizona. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the U.S. Government or contractor representatives to travel to Morocco.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-52

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:
1. The Radio Frequency (RF) TOW 2A Missile (BGM-71E-4B-RF) is designed to defeat armored vehicles, reinforced urban structures, field fortifications and other such targets. TOW missiles are fired from a variety of TOW launchers in the U.S. Army, USMC, and FMS customer forces. The TOW 2A RF missile can be launched from the same launcher platforms as the existing wire-guided TOW 2A missile without modification to the launcher. The TOW 2A missile (both wire & RF) contains two trackers for the launcher to track and guide the missile in flight. Guidance commands from the launcher are provided to the missile by a RF link contained within the missile case. The hardware, software, and technical publications provided with the sale thereof are UNCLASSIFIED. However, the system itself contains sensitive technology that instructs the system on how to operate in the presence of countermeasures.

2. The highest level of classified information that must be disclosed in training to use the end item is UNCLASSIFIED. The highest level of classified information that must be disclosed in maintenance of the end item is UNCLASSIFIED. The highest level of classified information that could be disclosed by sale of the end item is SECRET. The highest level of classified information that could be revealed by testing the end item is SECRET. The highest level of classified information that could be revealed by reverse engineering of the end item is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Morocco.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-15, concerning the Department of the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$3.5 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J. W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-15

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

Prospective Purchaser: United Arab Emirates.

(i) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$1.68 billion

Other \$1.82 billion

Total \$3.50 billion

(ii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Twenty-eight (28) AH-64E Remanufactured Apache Attack Helicopters.

Nine (9) new AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters.

Seventy-six (76) T700-GE-701D Engines (56 remanufactured, 18 new, 2 spares).

Thirty-nine (39) AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/AN/AAR-11 Modernized Pilot Night Vision Sensors (28 remanufactured, 9 new, 2 spares).

Thirty-two (32) remanufactured AN/APR-48B Modernized—Radar Frequency Interferometers.

Forty-six (46) AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (31 remanufactured, 9 new, 6 spares).

Eighty-eight (88) Embedded Global Positioning Systems with Inertial Navigation (72 new, 16 spares).

Forty-four (44) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-International (MUMTI) Systems (28 remanufactured, 9 new, 7 spares).

Fifteen (15) new MUMTI System Upper Receivers.

Non-MDE: Training devices, helmets, simulators, generators, transportation, wheeled vehicles and organization equipment, spare and repair parts, support equipment, tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (AE-B-GUA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: FMS case: AE-B-JAH-02 Jan 92-\$617M, FMS case: AE-B-UDE-06 Jan 00-\$195M, FMS case: AE-B-UDN-28 Nov 05-\$755M, FMS case: AE-B-ZUL-21 Oct 09-\$252M, FMS case: AE-B-ZUF-22 Dec 08-\$174M

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Annex Attached.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: December 7, 2016.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

United Arab Emirates—Apache AH-64E Helicopters and Services

The Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has requested a possible sale of twenty-eight (28) AH-64E Remanufactured Apache Attack Helicopters; nine (9) new AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopters; Seventy-six (76) T700-GE-701D Engines (56 remanufactured, 18 new, 2 spares); thirty-nine (39) AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/AN/AAR-11 Modernized Pilot Night Vision Sensors (28 remanufactured, 9 new, 2 spares); thirty-two (32) remanufactured AN/APR-48B Modernized—Radar Frequency Interferometers forty-six (46) AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (31 remanufactured, 9 new, 6 spares); eighty-eight (88) Embedded Global Positioning Systems with Inertial Navigation (72 new, 16 spares); forty-four (44) Manned-Unmanned Teaming-International (MUMTI) systems (28 remanufactured, 9 new, 7 spares); and fifteen (15) new MUMTI System Upper Receivers. This request also includes training devices, helmets, simulators, generators, transportation, wheeled vehicles and organization equipment, spare and repair parts, support equipment, tools and test equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support. Total estimated program cost is \$3.5 billion.

This proposed sale will enhance the foreign policy and national security of the U.S. by helping to improve the security of a friendly country that has been and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will improve the UAE's capability to meet current and future threats and provide greater security for its critical infrastructure. The UAE will use the enhanced capability to strengthen its homeland defense. The UAE will have no difficulty absorbing these Apache aircraft into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Boeing in Mesa, AZ and Lockheed Martin in Orlando, FL. Offsets are a requirement of doing business in UAE; however offsets are negotiated directly between the Original Equipment Manufacturers or other vendors and the UAE government and details are not known at this time.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of contractor representatives to the UAE.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-15

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The AH-64E Apache Attack Helicopter weapon system contains communications and target identification equipment, navigation equipment, aircraft survivability equipment, displays, and sensors. The airframe itself does not contain sensitive technology; however, the pertinent equipment listed below will be either installed on the aircraft or included in the sale:

a. The AN/APG-78 Fire Control Radar (FCR) is an active, low-probability of inter-

cept, millimeter-wave radar, combined with a passive AN/APR-48B Modernized Radar Frequency Interferometer (M-RFI) mounted on top of the helicopter mast. The FCR Ground Targeting Mode detects, locates, classifies and prioritizes stationary or moving armored vehicles, tanks and mobile air defense systems as well as hovering helicopters, helicopters, and fixed wing aircraft in normal flight if desired, the radar data can be used to refer targets to the regular electro-optical Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight (MTADS). This information is provided in a form that cannot be extracted by the foreign user. The content of these items is classified SECRET. User Data Module (UDM) on the RFI processor, contains the Radio Frequency threat library. The UDM, which is a hardware assemblage, is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed with threat parameters, threat priorities and/or techniques derived from U.S. intelligence information.

b. The AN/ASQ-170 Modernized Target Acquisition and Designation Sight/AN/AAQ-11 Pilot Night Vision Sensor (MTADS/PNVS) provides day, night, and limited adverse weather target information, as well as night navigation capabilities. The PNVS provides thermal imaging that permits nap-of-the-earth flight to, from, and within the battle area, while TADS provides the co-pilot gunner with search, detection, recognition, and designation by means of Direct View Optics (DVO), EPtelevision, and Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) sighting systems that may be used singularly or in combinations. Hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. Technical manuals for authorized maintenance levels are UNCLASSIFIED. Reverse engineering is not a major concern.

c. The AN/APR-48B Modernized Radar Frequency Interferometer (M-RFI) is an updated version of the passive radar detection and direction finding system. It utilizes a detachable UDM on the M-RFI processor, which contains the Radar Frequency (RF) threat library. The UDM, which is a hardware assemblage item is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed. Hardware becomes CLASSIFIED when populated with threat parametric data. Releasable technical manuals are Unclassified/restricted distribution.

d. The AAR-57 Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) detects energy emitted by threat missiles in-flight, evaluates potential false alarm emitters in the environment, declares validity of threat and selects appropriate countermeasures. The CMWS consists of an Electronic Control Unit (ECU), Electro-Optic Missile Sensors (EOMSs), and Sequencer and Improved Countermeasures Dispenser (ICMD). The ECU hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified SECRET.

e. The AN/APR-39 Radar Signal Detecting Set is a system that provides warnings of radar-directed air defense threats and allows appropriate countermeasures. This is the 1553 databus-compatible configuration. The hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL when programmed with U.S. threat data; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical data (technical performance) is classified SECRET. The system can be programmed with threat data provided by the purchasing country.

f. The AN/AVR-2B Laser Warning Set is a passive laser warning system that receives, processes, and displays threat information resulting from aircraft illumination by lasers on the multi-functional display. The hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL; releasable technical manuals for operation and maintenance are classified SECRET.

g. The Embedded Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System plus

MultiMode Receiver (EGI+MMR). The aircraft has two EGIs which use internal accelerometers, rate gyro measurements, and external sensor measurements to estimate the aircraft state, provides aircraft flight and position data to aircraft systems. The EGI is a velocity-aided, strap down, ring laser gyro based inertial unit. The EGI unit houses a GPS receiver. The receiver is capable of operating in either non-encrypted or encrypted. When keyed, the GPS receiver will automatically use anti-spoof/jam capabilities when they are in use. The EGI will retain the key through power on/off/on cycles. Because of safeguards built into the EGI, it is not considered classified when keyed. Integrated within the EGI is an Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) for processing functions. Each EGI also houses a Multi-Mode Receiver (MMR). The MMR is incorporated to provide for reception of ground based NAVAIID signals for instrument aided flight. Provides IMC I IFR integration and certification of improved Embedded Global Positioning System and Inertial (EGI) unit, with attached MMR, with specific cockpit instrumentation allows Apaches to operate within the worldwide IFR route structure. Also includes integration of the Common Army Aviation Map (CAAM), Area Navigation (RNAV), Digital Aeronautical Flight Information File (DAFIF) and Global Air Traffic Management (GATM) compliance.

h. Manned-Unmanned Teaming-International (MUMT-I) provides Manned-Unmanned Teaming with Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs), other Apaches and other interoperable aircraft and land platforms. Provides ability to display real-time UAS sensor information to aircraft and transmit MTADS video. Capability to receive video and metadata from Interoperability Profile compliant (IOP) as well as legacy systems. It is a data link for the AH-64E that provides a fully integrated multiband, interoperable capability that allows pilots to receive off-board sensor video streaming from different platforms in non-Tactical Common Data Link (TCDL) bands. The MUMT-I data link can retransmit Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) or Apache Modernized Target Acquisition Designation Sight full-motion sensor video and metadata to another MUMT-I-equipped Apache. It can also transmit to ground forces equipped with the One Station Remote Video Terminal. It provides Apache aircrews with increased situational awareness and net-centric interoperability while significantly reducing sensor-to-shooter timelines. This combination results in increased survivability of Apache aircrews and ground forces by decreasing their exposure to hostile fire.

i. Link 16 is a military tactical data exchange network. Its specification is part of the family of Tactical Data Links. Link 16 provides aircrews with enhanced situational awareness and the ability to exchange target information to Command and Control (C2) assets via Tactical Digital Information Link-Joint (TADIL-J). Link 16 can provide a range of combat information in near-real time to U.S. and allies' combat aircraft and C2 centers. This will contribute to the integrated control of fighters by either ground-based or airborne controllers and will greatly increase the fighters' situational awareness and ability either to engage targets designated by controllers or to avoid threats, thereby increasing mission effectiveness and reducing fratricide and attrition. The Link 16 enables the Apache to receive information from the command-and-control platforms and enables it to share this data with all the other services, making it more efficient at locating and prosecuting targets. The material solution for the AH-64E is currently the Small Tactical Terminal (SIT) KOR-24A

from Harris to satisfy its requirement for an Airborne and Maritime/Fixed Station (AMF) Small Airborne Link 16 Terminal (SALT). The SIT is the latest generation of small, two-channel, Link 16 and VHF/UHF radio terminals. While in flight, the SIT provides simultaneous communication, voice or data, on two key waveforms.

2. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures which might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

3. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

4. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of the United Arab Emirates.

21ST CENTURY CURES BILL

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am pleased to see that the 21st Century Cures Act will fix one of the issues associated with payments for hospital outpatient departments that arose from the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015. You will recall that section 603 of that act changed the way these departments will be reimbursed by Medicare in the future. Hospital outpatient departments that were billing Medicare prior to November 2, 2015, however, were exempted from these reduced payments.

We have heard from a number of hospitals in Florida that were in the middle of developing hospital outpatient departments when the new law went into effect. They had made substantial investments in these new departments under the assumption that Medicare would pay them just as it had been doing for years. I am pleased to see that the 21st Century Cures Act will permit hospitals that were in the process of developing outpatient departments to be reimbursed under the previous payment system.

In my State, Jackson Health System, a large public hospital which is known throughout the world for its high-quality healthcare and its value as a public hospital in our community, was in the process of building four new outpatient departments for patients in the Miami-Dade County area when the new law was passed. They had executed binding leases on three of the departments, constructed facilities, and finalized contracts for architectural and engineering reviews on several of the facilities. They had gone through a long process of getting the necessary approvals and financing from the county and State governments.

It is obvious that all four of Jackson's outpatient facilities meet the "mid-build" exception contained in section 16001 of the 21st Century Cures Act. The actual construction of these facilities was complete, and Jackson

was in the process of securing all the necessary requirements for the renovations of these facilities when the new law was passed on November 2, 2015. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, clearly agreed when they issued provider numbers to all four new outpatient departments in September and October 2015. For hospitals like Jackson, the subsequent change in the law essentially changed the rules in the middle of the game. I urge CMS to work with all hospitals in similar situations.

I am very pleased that the 21st Century Cures Act will provide relief to the Jackson Health System and hospitals like it that had made these investments in future outpatient healthcare departments prior to the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEDERAL RULE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE 41

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following letters from law enforcement groups be printed in the RECORD in support of the recent changes to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41 that was the subject of debate on the floor of the Senate on November 30, 2016: a December 6, 2016, letter signed by the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, and the Sergeant's Benevolent Association NYPD; a December 5, 2016, letter signed by the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association; a December 5, 2016, letter signed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation Agents Association; a December 5, 2016, letter signed by the National Fraternal Order of Police; and, a December 5, 2016, letter signed by the National Association to Protect Children.

DECEMBER 6, 2016.

Re: Rule 41 Changes.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY AND RANKING MEMBER LEAHY: We write in support of changes to Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure that improve the ability of law enforcement to obtain evidence despite efforts by criminals to hide behind technology. The changes encourage judicial oversight of complex online investigations and give investigators a clear roadmap to seek authorization for their techniques.

Rule 41 improvements help solve a simple conundrum for law enforcement: if you don't know where a computer is located that is being used to commit a crime, how do you know which court to ask for a search warrant to find the computer? Investigators sought these common-sense changes because they needed court oversight and authorization to identify criminals hiding behind

technological barriers, not because they wanted to avoid oversight.

Rule 41 only governs cases where investigators are seeking a search warrant issued by a neutral magistrate based upon probable cause, particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized. If these changes are not made, then criminals could hide behind anonymizing services with impunity, knowing that law enforcement could never lawfully figure out which court had jurisdiction over them.

The stated goal of several legislative reforms addressing law enforcement access to digital evidence is to modernize the law to accommodate changing technology, preserving law enforcement access while protecting privacy. Ensuring that law enforcement can access evidence it needs with appropriate judicial oversight is precisely what these Rule 41 changes will do.

Sincerely,

ASSOCIATION OF STATE
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE
AGENCIES,
INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS
OF POLICE,
MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS
ASSOCIATION,
MAJOR COUNTY SHERIFFS'
ASSOCIATION,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
POLICE ORGANIZATIONS,
NATIONAL DISTRICT
ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL SHERIFFS'
ASSOCIATION,
NATIONAL SHERIFFS'
ASSOCIATION,
SERGEANT'S BENEVOLENT
ASSOCIATION NYPD.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2016.

Re: Rule 41 Amendments.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC,
Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Ju-
diciary, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA)—the nation's largest professional, non-profit association representing over 26,000 federal law enforcement officers from 65 agencies—I am writing to express our strong support for the recently implemented amendments to Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. These amendments will enhance and improve the ability for law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute terrorists, transnational child pornographers, and cyber criminals who use computer networks to conceal their physical location.

FLEOA shares the same opinion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Agent's Association (FBIAA), the National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys (NAAUSA) and the National Association to Protect Children. We all agree that the Rule 41 amendments are necessary to address investigative hindrances that result from the difficulty of identifying the exact location of a computer when seeking a warrant. Terrorists and criminals frequently use complex computer networks, spread across the country and the world to anonymize communica-

tions, but the previous version of Rule 41 only allowed magistrate judges to issue warrants for evidence within their jurisdictions. This situation created ambiguity and significant burdens for investigators allowing transnational sexual predators and cyber criminals anonymity.

The Rule 41 amendments resolve the uncertainty surrounding the warrant process by establishing a court-supervised framework for conducting investigations that will protect the privacy interests of the public. FLEOA believes these changes, which took effect on December 1, 2016 are reasonable and necessary.

Respectively,

NATHAN CATURA,
FLEOA National President.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
AGENTS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, December 5, 2016.

Re: Rule 41 Amendments.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Ju-
diciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS: On behalf of the FBI Agents Association ("FBIAA"), a voluntary professional association currently representing over 13,000 active duty and retired FBI Special Agents, I write to express our support for the recently implemented amendments to Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure ("Rule 41"). These amendments will enhance the ability for law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute criminals, such as terrorists and child pornographers, who use computer networks to disguise their physical location.

The FBIAA shares the opinion of FBI Director Comey and the Department of Justice that the narrow changes included in the Rule 41 amendments are necessary to address investigative obstacles that result from the difficulty of identifying the specific location of a computer when seeking a warrant. Criminals frequently use complex computer networks spread across the country and the world to anonymize their communications, but the previous version of Rule 41 only allowed magistrate judges to issue warrants for evidence within their jurisdictions. This situation created uncertainty and significant administrative burdens for investigators, and as Director Comey noted earlier this year, the previous iteration of Rule 41 created problems "for some of our most important investigations."

The Rule 41 amendments resolve the uncertainty surrounding the warrant process by establishing a court-supervised framework for conducting investigations that will protect the privacy interests of the public. The FBIAA believes these changes, which took effect on December 1, 2016, are reasonable and necessary.

The FBIAA is pleased that the Senate did not interfere with the implementation of the Rule 41 amendments, and we look forward to continuing our work with Congress on these important issues.

If you have any questions, please contact me, FBIAA General Counsel Dee Martin, dee.martin@bracewelllaw.com, and Joshua Zive, joshua.zive@bracewelllaw.com.

Sincerely,

THOMAS O'CONNOR,
President.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL
ORDER OF POLICE,

Washington, DC, December 5, 2016.

Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN AND SENATOR LEAHY, I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong and continued support for the changes to Rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure made by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The FOP supports these changes and we believe they will benefit law enforcement officers conducting online investigations. These changes will ensure that Federal agents know which judge to go to in order to apply for a warrant when the cybercriminals they are investigating have hidden their location through anonymizing technology. This search warrant will help law enforcement discover where these criminals are located and end their illicit activity.

Law enforcement officers are now able to obtain warrants from a single judge instead of multiple applications in many jurisdictions to obtain the same information. This will help speed up investigations into crimes like computer hacking, where offenders unlawfully access computers remotely and cross jurisdictional boundaries.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to thank you for your consistent strong support for the men and women of law enforcement throughout this country. I look forward to working with you and your staff on this issue. If I can be of any additional help in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION TO
PROTECT CHILDREN,
Knoxville, TN, December 5, 2016.

Hon. JOHN CORNYN:
U.S. Senate, Majority Whip, Chair, Judiciary
Subcommittee on The Constitution, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CORNYN, We are writing you in support of the amendment to the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rule 41. It has been with great concern over the last decade that we have watched as child sexual predators take advantage of new technologies, including ways to hide their exploitation of children through the use of proxies, anonymizers and encryption.

The internet was not created to give technologically savvy offenders an advantage in obfuscating their crimes, and offenders who participate in the global demand for the rape and torture of children should not be rewarded for being good at hiding.

Make no mistake, the offenders who take advantage of the "dark web" are some of the most dangerous offenders that exist. For proof of this one need look no further than one of the most notorious ICE cases in history, the recent "Operation DeleGo". This transnational child exploitation case involved between 600-900 of the worst offenders ICE has seen. It led to 72 indictments (of which 15 are for "John Doe" warrants) and 57 arrests. This investigation uncovered a private bulletin board where hands on offenders produced hardcore child rape imagery and shared it by utilizing sophisticated proxies and encryption methods. The members were segregated into groups, including a "Super VIP" section and according to the "Hawkeye

Indictment" provided by the US Department of Justice, "The rules controlling what could be posted in that section were as follows:

"Keep the girls under 13, in fact, I really need to see 12 or younger to know your (sic) a brother".
and:

"It's very young kids, getting (expletive), and preteens in distress and or crying, etc. . . . Getting hit hard on the ass, with a belt and so on . . . I can't believe some of you guys can't work it out for yourselves? And "pretend" bondage, "pretend light whipping" is not super hardcore. If the girl looks total (sic) comfortable, she's not in distress, it does NOT belong I (sic) this section (smiley face icon)".

In another transnational child exploitation case investigated by ICE dubbed "Operation Round Table", Jonathon Johnson, a 27 year old predator from Louisiana, operated a 27,000 member hidden service site on TOR for the production and dissemination of child sexual abuse images. Johnson created a "honeypot" site by stealing a young woman's identity and pretending to be her. Not only did he persuade over 251 child victims to provide him with sexually explicit images and video but he was successful in convincing some of his victims to sexually assault their younger relatives on camera for him, some of whom were under the age of 3.

We applaud Congress and the US Supreme Court for providing this amendment to rule 41, which can only be described as long overdue.

The internet has provided vexing challenges to today's law enforcement efforts to protect children and for their sake government must keep pace.

With much gratitude,

CAMILLE COOPER,
*Director, Government
Affairs, The National Association to
PROTECT Children
& PROTECT.*

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor our colleagues who are leaving us at the end of this Congress, six individuals who have done a lot to shape how the Senate operates today.

First I would like to thank my three Republican colleagues who are departing. Thank you not only for their service to our country but your willingness to work with me and other members of my party on a number of issues.

DAN COATS

Mr. President, Senator Coats and I served on the Intelligence Committee together. He was a supporter of many of our efforts, including our encryption bill to require all companies to abide by lawful court orders.

MARK KIRK

Mr. President, Senator MARK KIRK took a brave stance on gun violence issues, bucking his party by cosponsoring our amendment to close the terrorist loophole.

KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. President, Senator AYOTTE and I have worked very closely to improve breast cancer detection. I am hopeful that together we can pass our bill before the end of this Congress.

I would also like to speak to three of my closest colleagues on our side of the aisle.

Over the past 24 years, I have had the pleasure of serving in the Senate with HARRY REID, BARBARA MIKULSKI, and BARBARA BOXER, and I am grateful not just for our working relationships but for the close friendships I have formed with each of them.

HARRY REID

Mr. President, Senator REID has served in Congress since 1983, and he has been our party's leader for the past decade. Despite more than three decades in Washington, Senator REID still retains the values instilled in him while growing up in Searchlight, NV. Often described as a tough fighter, he has respect from both sides of the aisle for being a consensus builder who is willing to constantly work to find a deal.

One issue on which Senator REID and I share a passion is Lake Tahoe, the High Sierra lake that straddles the California-Nevada border.

Twenty years ago, HARRY invited President Bill Clinton to announce a major commitment to restoring the health of Lake Tahoe. That first summit launched a public-private partnership that has now invested \$1.2 billion in conservation and restoration projects around the lake.

This year, Senator REID told me he wanted to turn the annual summit into a celebration by inviting President Obama to speak. The event was a huge success, with more than 7,000 people attending.

I will miss HARRY's passion and leadership, but if anyone deserves a break, it is him.

BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. President, BARBARA MIKULSKI is another fearless leader whom I admire.

When I first came to the Senate in November of 1992, there were only three female Senators: Jocelyn Burdick of North Dakota, who retired a month later; Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas; and, of course, Senator BARB.

Senator MIKULSKI often quips, "I may be short, but I won't be overlooked." History certainly will not overlook the contributions she has made.

Rising to become the first woman to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI is often described as a trailblazer. To the women in the Senate, she is a mentor, the dean of the Senate women.

From three women in 1992 to 20 women senators today—and 21 in the next Congress, much of that progress can be attributed to the leadership of the longest serving woman in Congress, Senator MIKULSKI.

BARBARA BOXER

Mr. President, finally, I would like to talk about my partner from California, BARBARA BOXER.

Senator BOXER and I were elected to the Senate on the same day in 1992, the "Year of the Woman."

The day BARBARA was sworn in was historic; it was the first time two women represented their State together in the Senate. That is an honor I am grateful to have shared with my good friend.

From the Marin County Board of Supervisors, to the House of Representatives, to the United States Senate—Senator BOXER has been a champion for families, children, consumers, and the environment.

She rose to become the chair and now ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. I have great respect for Senator BOXER's passion, dedication, and enthusiasm for protecting the environment. No one does it better.

She led an effort to protect California's coast from offshore drilling. She authored the California Missions Preservation Act to restore and protect the 21 historic missions in California. She helped create Pinnacles National Park, Fort Ord National Monument, and Caesar Chavez National Monument. And she led the effort to expand the Gulf of Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.

In California, there are now more than 1 million acres of protected wilderness thanks to Senator BOXER.

But she was more than just a champion for our environment.

In the Senate, BARBARA was a staunch advocate for issues related to children.

She pushed to protect children from dangerous toys by removing lead or other dangerous chemicals and requiring cautionary warnings on children's products sold over the Internet. She fought to remove arsenic from drinking water to protect children. As chair of the After School Caucus, she wrote legislation to secure Federal funding for afterschool programs. Thanks to Senator BOXER, 1.6 million children now have a safe place to go after school.

She fought for our servicemembers.

She founded the Military Families Caucus to provide support for the families of servicemembers. She helped establish the West Coast Combat Care Center in San Diego, so that southern California veterans with traumatic wounds would have access to quality care.

And Senator BOXER fought for consumers.

She authored a bipartisan measure to prevent a conflict of interest with banks acting as real estate brokers. After the housing crisis, she wrote measures to protect homeowners whose mortgage is transferred or sold. And she pushed for legislation to help homeowners refinance with lower rates—thanks to that effort, 1 million borrowers were able to save thousands of dollars in interest payments each year.

And finally, BARBARA was a staunch defender of women's rights.

She led the floor fight to pass the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act and pushed back against repeated

attacks on women's health and a woman's right to privacy. Her efforts led to the passage of the Violence Against Women Act that protects women from domestic and sexual abuse.

She worked closely with then-Senator JOE BIDEN to pass that landmark bill. After she announced her retirement, the Vice President said: "You always knew in the Senate if you had BARBARA on your side, you didn't need much more."

Well, I have been lucky to have BARBARA by my side for the past 24 years.

She has been a strong advocate for the people of California, and I am grateful to have served with her.

I am also grateful for the friendship we have shared over the years.

BARBARA and her husband, Stewart, are two of the kindest, most caring people I have had the pleasure of knowing. Their marriage of more than 50 years has brought them considerable joy. Together they raised two wonderful children and are now blessed with four grandchildren.

I am sure she is looking forward to spending more time with them.

While she may be retiring from the Senate, the passion BARBARA displayed for public service will not end.

I know she will continue to advocate and remain a powerful voice for the causes she championed here in the United States Senate.

I look forward to seeing what she is able to accomplish in the next phase of her life and offer her best wishes in a well-deserved retirement.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Senator BARBARA BOXER, who has served her State and country with boundless energy, enthusiasm, and exuberance.

Senator BOXER's 24 years in the Senate are only part of her legacy of leadership and accomplishments. Previously, she served for 10 years in the House of Representatives for California's Sixth Congressional District and before that as the first woman president of the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

That remarkable record of service includes another record. In her reelection in 2004, Senator BOXER received nearly 7 million votes, the most in Senate history until that time and a mark that stood for 8 years.

During her service in the Senate, Senator BOXER has established herself as a champion of the environment, infrastructure, and medical research. Along with Senator INHOFE, she authored a 5-year transportation bill that many thought was an impossible task in a gridlocked Senate. But she worked across the aisle and did it. The United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act she authored in 2012 reaffirmed the special relationship between our two countries and is another of Senator BOXER's accomplishments.

It has been especially rewarding to work with her on legislation to better

protect women from violence, in our country and around the world.

In her first campaign for Congress in 1982, she ran under the slogan, "Barbara Boxer Gives a Damn." She always has and always will. It is a pleasure to thank Senator BARBARA BOXER for her years of service and to wish her and her husband, Stewart, many more years of good health and great happiness.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, Maine and New Hampshire share a border, a history, and an invigorating climate. When KELLY AYOTTE came to the Senate 6 years ago, I immediately saw in her those traits shared by the people of our two States: a strong work ethic, a respect for tradition balanced by a spirit of innovation, and fiscal prudence always tempered by compassion.

During those years, I came to know Senator AYOTTE as a diligent, energetic, and committed public servant.

She brought with her to the Senate a remarkable record of public service. As her State's attorney general, she fought hard to protect the people of New Hampshire and the environment that is so crucial to their way of life.

It has been rewarding to work with her on such bipartisan efforts as the Terrorist Firearms Prevention Act, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and addressing the opioid addiction crisis confronting our States. From her support for land conservation to advancing biomass energy, she has been a strong leader in the wise use of natural resources and their role in growing the economy.

Coming from a military family, she has demonstrated her respect for our men and women in uniform as a member of the Armed Services Committee and is recognized as a leading voice on national security issues and the well-being of our veterans. We have joined together on many occasions to advocate for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard that is so important to our Nation's defense and to the dedicated men and women of our two States who work there.

It has been an honor to serve with KELLY AYOTTE in the United States Senate, and the American people are better off for her service. I wish KELLY and her wonderful family all the best in the years to come.

HONORING SERGEANT STEVEN C. OWEN

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Sergeant Steven C. Owen, a beloved husband and father who tragically lost his life in the line of duty on October 5, 2016.

Sergeant Owen was born in Encino, CA, and proudly joined the Los Angeles County Sheriff's department almost three decades ago. He spent most of his career at the Lancaster Sheriff's station, patrolling the streets of his Ante-

lope Valley community with pride. Well known for his courage as well as kindness, Sergeant Owen received a Meritorious Conduct Medal in 2014 after safely rescuing a hostage held at gunpoint, devising the rescue plan and ensuring that his deputies were kept out of harm's way.

Colleagues fondly remembered Sergeant Owen's tireless work ethic, selfless nature, and deep commitment to the community he served. "Sergeant Owen had the qualities of a religious man—maybe a priest, a minister or a rabbi, or someone who took vows to serve mankind," said Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell. "He fed the hungry, he clothed those who needed it, and Steve Owen comforted the traumatized."

Outside of work, Sergeant Owen spent most of his time volunteering, coaching youth football, and mentoring young students. He also taught landlords and businessowners how to reduce crime on their properties. A skilled water-skier and equestrian, Sergeant Owen also enjoyed camping and gardening in his free time.

Above all else, Sergeant Owen was devoted to his family and his faith. On behalf of the people of California, whom Sergeant Owen served so bravely, I extended my gratitude and deepest sympathies to his wife, Tania; children, Brandon, Chadd, and Shannon; and his entire extended family.

HONORING OFFICER LESLEY ZEREBNY

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring to the life of Police Officer Lesley Zerebny, a beloved wife, devoted mother, and esteemed colleague who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 8, 2016.

Officer Zerebny was born in Hemet, CA, to David and Luanne Kling. She was raised in a law enforcement family and expressed a desire to become a police officer from a young age. In 2014, Officer Zerebny joined the Palm Springs Police Department as a police officer trainee and was promoted to police officer after graduating from the Riverside County Sheriff's Academy.

Her positive attitude and commitment to the job helped Officer Zerebny stand out at the Palm Springs Police Department. She consistently accepted additional assignments and always offered a helping hand to her colleagues. She was described as "small in stature, but fearless" and "fiery, creative, full of life and tough as nails." Hard-working, dedicated, and compassionate, Officer Zerebny courageously served her community with distinction.

Officer Zerebny took enormous pride in everything she set out to do—especially in her service as a police officer—but her proudest accomplishment was her family. On behalf of the people of California whom Officer Zerebny served so bravely, I extend my heartfelt condolences to her husband, Zach;

daughter, Cora; and her parents, David and Luanne.

REMEMBERING HAROLD JOHN SHIMER

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, today marks the 75th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. It was during that fateful event that more than 2,400 American lives were lost and another 1,100 were wounded. While that day took a tragic toll, heroes were made of those who rushed to action. I wish to honor the life and memory of one such Pearl Harbor hero who went on to serve his country for an additional 20 years after that day. That man is Harold John Shimer, who passed away on October 30, 2016, at the age of 97 in Anacortes, WA.

Mr. Shimer was born on February 12, 1919, in Wurstboro, NY, the son of Harold and Irma Shimer. He attended schools in Wurstboro and Middleton, NY, and enjoyed working with his father on their 640-acre dairy farm. After graduating high school, Mr. Shimer joined the U.S. Navy.

Mr. Shimer had begun his naval career as a storekeeper third class aboard the newly commissioned USS *Helena*, where the ship's first assignment was as neutrality patrol in South America, protecting Uruguay and Argentina prior to the United States' entrance into World War II. Mr. Shimer had the very unique and rare account of watching the famous German *Graf Spee* warship and its captain, which had sunk nine merchant ships, scuttle itself after being pursued by English warships.

The USS *Helena* was assigned to the Pacific, where it was at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. It was hit by a Japanese torpedo and lost 23 men. Mr. Shimer and the other surviving crewmembers immediately fired back against the attackers. He passed ammunition for the new guns that had just been installed that summer. He recalled, "In a superhuman effort we emptied the ammunition locker in less than two hours." Mr. Shimer and his team were credited with saving the USS *Pennsylvania*, the flagship of the fleet in a drydock just forward of the *Helena*. Following repairs, the *Helena* went on to win fame for sinking a number of Japanese ships before being sunk herself by a submarine in 1943.

Mr. Shimer returned to the States before being reassigned to establish a submarine depot in Fremantle, Australia, and was promoted to chief warrant officer. In 1947, he was assigned to the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, DC, then to Japan Naval Supply Depot, Yokosuka, Japan, and finally Naval Depot, Seattle, WA. Mr. Shimer had served aboard the USS *Philippine Sea*, USS *Mount McKinley*, and USS *Constellation*. He retired from Naval Station Seattle in June 1961, after 22 years of patriotic service to his country.

Mr. Shimer's great pleasure was golfing with all his friends in the Similk

Men's Golf Club, and he was an active member of Pearl Harbor Survivors, life member of VFW and American Legion, and member of the Anacortes Elks Lodge.

Mr. Shimer is survived by his wife, Carolyn; daughters Patricia Armstrong, Terrie Hughes, and step-daughter Brenda Eissenstat; grandchildren Toni Gill and Clayton Hughes and step-grandsons Ethan and Daniel Eissenstat; great-grandchildren Mitchell, Jamie, and Katelin Gill and Hayley and Brynn Hughes; step-sister Gale Angelostro; sister-in-law Blanche Shimer; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Please join me in extending our warmest gratitude to Mr. Shimer and his family for the years of dedicated service to his country and for being an upstanding and active member of the Anacortes community. His stories, which were described as no less than "amazing", will be missed, but they will also live on in the memories of family and friends that knew him well.

REMEMBERING LEROY MAZELL SMITH

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Leroy Mazell Smith, an aviation mechanic from Fordyce, AR, who was part of the illustrious Tuskegee Airmen and served his country with honor and distinction.

Born in 1927, Smith loved to tell the story of his birth with wry humor and fondness. A midwife helped his mother deliver him while on a bridge where some had taken refuge from the great Mississippi River flood of that year. They remained there for 4 days before his birth was documented. The result was that his birth certificate indicated a different date of birth, 4 days after his actual birthday.

From that unusual beginning, he went on to lead a remarkable life. He credited his Baptist grandfather with having a large influence on him growing up, including teaching him the value of hard work. He graduated from high school at age 16 and took preflight aeronautical classes. After graduation, Smith joined the U.S. Army Air Corps and became a mechanic.

He completed basic training in Texas and was stationed at Chanute Field in Illinois. Later, during World War II, he was sent to Europe where he was assigned to the Tuskegee Airmen Red Tail squadron. He remembered being scared during his time in theater but always relayed his sense of pride in the work he did and the fact that the Tuskegee unit never lost a bomber.

Smith also helped break social and racial barriers in the military. As part of the group of African Americans who served in the Armed Forces in the mid-20th century, he was among many servicemembers who confronted segregation within the barracks and beyond. Even so, he recalled his time in the Army Air Corps as "one of his best memories."

Leroy Smith honorably served with the U.S. Army Air Corps and the U.S. Air Force for more than 25 years, including further combat tours in Korea and Vietnam. He retired in 1968 as a master sergeant.

Leroy Mazell Smith passed away on December 1, 2016. He will be laid to rest on December 9, wearing an Air Force uniform complete with the medals he earned during his service, a recent request that the nonprofit veterans' support group Team Red, White and Blue helped fulfill.

Smith is an American hero whose admirable service is recognized and appreciated by all Arkansans. I extend my sincere condolences to his family and friends, and I hope that they take comfort in the wonderful legacy that he leaves behind.

TRIBUTE TO JOE AND LOUISE HEAD

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Joe and Louise Head, recipients of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation's 2016 Jacob E. Davis Volunteer Leadership Award, which is presented annually to honor citizens who have made significant contributions to the greater Cincinnati community.

Recognized for their generosity as philanthropic and civic leaders, Joe and Louise have volunteered their time, talents, and treasure to countless community endeavors to make the greater Cincinnati community a better place to live.

They have both been very active volunteers to many local organizations including Xavier University, Seven Hills School, the Metropolitan Growth Alliance, and the Cincinnati Nature Center. Joe and Louise have also provided significant leadership by serving as trustees and board members to many civic and charitable organizations. Louise is a former governing board chair of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, and Joe is a former chair of the Christ Hospital Health Network board of directors. No couple is more community-minded, and the people of greater Cincinnati have been the beneficiaries.

I would like to congratulate Joe and Louise Head on this award.

NASHVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S CENTENNIAL

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Nashville Fire Department in North Carolina. On December 17, 2016, the men and women of the department will celebrate their 100th anniversary.

The Nashville Fire Department has a tremendous history of dedicated service to its community. On December 17, 1916, it was outfitted with their first hose and reel to replace the previous bucket brigades. As the oldest fire department in Nash County, NC, its volunteers and employees continue, to this day, risking their lives to protect

the welfare of their citizens. I am so proud of their dedication to keeping us safe in the Tar Heel State.

The mission of the Nashville Fire Department is to “protect lives, property, and the environment by providing skillful and cost effective fire and life safety services.” The Nashville Fire Department goes above and beyond accomplishing this by answering approximately 1,700 calls for service yearly for either fire protection, EMS response, or vehicle extrication. Additionally, this department specializes in trench rescue—one of the most challenging rescue events that emergency responders can face.

I salute the brave men and women of the Nashville Fire Department for 100 years of protective service to the people of Nashville, NC. Through their efforts, they make their community a better, safer place.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the tremendous accomplishments of the city of Santa Barbara, a community that has pioneered efforts in sustainability and environmental preservation for many years.

For over four decades, the city of Santa Barbara has been a leader in protecting and enhancing the local environment. In 1969, a devastating oil spill released an estimated 80,000 to 100,000 barrels of oil into the Santa Barbara Channel, resulting in public outcry over the significant damage to the ocean waters and wildlife. Local residents and civic leaders immediately began advocating for environmental reforms, and a few months later, Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act, one of the first laws to establish a national framework for protecting our environment. Soon after, the California Coastal Commission was created in 1972 as an independent State agency committed to preserving California’s beautiful coastline.

As the Santa Barbara community grew and the effects of global climate change became more apparent, local leaders developed innovative initiatives to reduce waste, decrease emissions, and conserve natural resources. Specifically, the city imposed stormwater requirements for development projects to prevent runoff and implemented a shared-use vehicle program to reduce fuel costs and the number of vehicles in the city’s fleet. These efforts helped cut water consumption by 15 to 20 percent and reduce emissions by 10 percent, respectively. Next year, Santa Barbara will begin using a state-of-the-art water desalination facility that will reduce electrical demand and environmental impacts while supplying roughly 30 percent of the city’s water.

I want to congratulate the city of Santa Barbara for its dedicated efforts to preserve our precious natural resources. Santa Barbara’s leadership will continue to make a profound difference for generations to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BRYON J. YOUNG

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the career of Mr. Bryon J. Young, executive director of the Army Contracting Command—Aberdeen Proving Ground (ACC-APG). Mr. Young will be retiring after 40 years of distinguished service to the country. Throughout his career, Mr. Young has proven himself a true public servant and his leadership will be truly missed. I would like to take this time to send my congratulations to Mr. Young on his retirement and reflect upon his long career, exemplified by his hard work, dedication, and passion.

Mr. Young dedicated his career to the defense and service of his Nation and his fellow citizens. A graduate of the University of Delaware and Boston University in the 1970s, Mr. Young went on to complete degrees at the Defense Systems Management College Program manager’s course and executive program manager’s course, as well as the U.S. Army War College and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Prior to his time with the Army Contracting Command, Mr. Young served for 27 years as an air defense officer in the Army with the 101st Airborne Division and as an ROTC instructor at Princeton University. Throughout his career, Mr. Young has displayed a commitment to excellence, and his numerous commands over the years are a testament to his work ethic and dedication. Among his many commands, Mr. Young has served as director of the U.S. Army Research Development and Engineering Command Contracting Center, director of the U.S. Army Contracting Agency in Falls Church, Virginia, chief of staff to the Army Contracting Agency, commander of the Defense Contract Management Agency Raytheon, and procurement team chief of U.S. Army Missile Command. Mr. Young’s years of service and experience have benefited not only those around him, but the Nation as a whole. In his most recent role as executive director of the Army Contracting Command—Aberdeen Proving Ground, Mr. Young managed a geographically dispersed contracting center responsible for executing more than 35,000 contracting actions valued at \$11 billion.

Mr. Young’s dedication to the Armed Services and our country are evident not only from his four decades of service and leadership, but also from his numerous decorations, which include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal.

Throughout his long and distinguished career in public service, Mr.

Young has always placed his community and country first. We are all grateful for his dedicated service which will long be remembered. On behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a grateful Nation, I would like to once again extend my congratulations to Mr. Young on his retirement and thank him for his decades of public service. I wish him all the best in the years ahead.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 9:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1555. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 2234. An act to award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 1:47 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 817. An act to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe in the State of Oregon.

S. 818. An act to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes.

S. 2873. An act to require studies and reports examining the use of, and opportunities to use, technology-enabled collaborative learning and capacity building models to improve programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes.

S. 3076. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish caskets and urns for burial in cemeteries of States and tribal organizations of veterans without next of kin or sufficient resources to provide for caskets or urns, and for other purposes.

S. 3492. An act to designate the Traverse City VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in

Traverse City, Michigan, as the "Colonel Demas T. Craw VA Clinic.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 756. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide for the dissemination of information regarding available Federal programs relating to energy efficiency projects for schools, and for other purposes.

H.R. 875. An act to provide for alternative financing arrangements for the provision of certain services and the construction and maintenance of infrastructure at land border ports of entry, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3381. An act to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4150. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to modify the hours of employment of physicians employed on a full-time basis by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 4352. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program establishing a patient self-scheduling appointment system, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4680. An act to prepare the National Park Service for its Centennial in 2016 and for a second century of promoting and protecting the natural, historic, and cultural resources of our National Parks for the enjoyment of present and future generations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5399. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that physicians of the Department of Veterans Affairs fulfill the ethical duty to report to State licensing authorities impaired, incompetent, and unethical health care activities.

H.R. 6375. An act to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems.

H.R. 6394. An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to submit to Congress a report on promoting broadband Internet access service for veterans.

H.R. 6401. An act to amend Public Law 94-241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands.

H.R. 6416. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6438. An act to extend the waiver of limitations with respect to excluding from gross income amounts received by wrongfully incarcerated individuals.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the resolution (H. Con. Res. 174) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 34.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The message also announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 795. An act to enhance whistleblower protection for contractor and grantee employees.

S. 3395. An act to require limitations on prescribed burns.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 5:46 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5790. An act to provide adequate protections for whistleblowers at the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 3516. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, December 7, 2016, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 795. An act to enhance whistleblower protection for contractor and grantee employees.

S. 1555. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 2234. An act to award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

S. 2577. An act to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA and other forensic evidence samples to improve and expand the forensic science testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of forensic evidence, to provide post-conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to support accreditation efforts of forensic science laboratories and medical examiner officers, to address training and equipment needs, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes.

S. 3395. An act to require limitations on prescribed burns.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ISAKSON, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title:

S. 425. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a five-year extension to the homeless veterans reintegration programs and to provide clarification regarding eligibility for services under such programs (Rept. No. 114-395).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S. 8. A bill to provide for the approval of the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Con. Res. 30. A concurrent resolution expressing concern over the disappearance of David Sneddon, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 40. A concurrent resolution encouraging reunions of divided Korean American families.

S. Con. Res. 57. A concurrent resolution honoring in praise and remembrance the extraordinary life, steady leadership, and remarkable, 70-year reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 535. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the trafficking of illicit fentanyl into the United States from Mexico and China.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 537. A resolution expressing profound concern about the ongoing political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, urging the release of political prisoners, and calling for respect of constitutional and democratic processes.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 1150. A bill to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to improve the ability of the United States to advance religious freedom globally through enhanced diplomacy, training, counterterrorism, and foreign assistance efforts, and through stronger and more flexible political responses to religious freedom violations and violent extremism worldwide, and for other purposes.

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. 1182. A bill to exempt application of JSA attribution rule in case of existing agreements.

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2658. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2016 through 2017, and for other purposes.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment:

H.R. 2845. A bill to promote access to benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and for other purposes.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 4481. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the goal of all children in school and learning as an objective of the United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4939. A bill to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Ann Begeman, of South Dakota, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2020.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE—TREATY

The following executive report of committee was submitted:

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Treaty Doc. 114-12: Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Montenegro with 2 conditions and 7 declarations (Ex. Rept. 114-16)

The text of the committee-recommended resolution of advice and consent to ratification is as follows:

As reported by the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to Declarations and Conditions.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Montenegro, which was opened for signature in Brussels on May 19, 2016, and signed on behalf of the United States of America (the "Protocol") (Treaty Doc. 114-12), subject to the declarations of section 2 and the conditions of section 3.

Sec. 2. Declarations.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declarations:

(1) Reaffirmation that United States Membership in NATO Remains a Vital National Security Interest of The United States.—The Senate declares that—

(A) for more than 60 years the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has served as the preeminent organization to defend the countries in the North Atlantic area against all external threats;

(B) through common action, the established democracies of North America and Europe that were joined in NATO persevered and prevailed in the task of ensuring the survival of democratic government in Europe and North America throughout the Cold War;

(C) NATO enhances the security of the United States by embedding European states in a process of cooperative security planning and by ensuring an ongoing and direct leadership role for the United States in European security affairs;

(D) the responsibility and financial burden of defending the democracies of Europe and North America can be more equitably shared through an alliance in which specific obligations and force goals are met by its members;

(E) the security and prosperity of the United States is enhanced by NATO's collective defense against aggression that may threaten the security of NATO members; and

(F) United States membership in NATO remains a vital national security interest of the United States.

(2) Strategic Rationale For NATO Enlargement.—The Senate finds that—

(A) the United States and its NATO allies face continued threats to their stability and territorial integrity;

(B) an attack against Montenegro, or its destabilization arising from external subver-

sion, would threaten the stability of Europe and jeopardize United States national security interests;

(C) Montenegro, having established a democratic government and having demonstrated a willingness to meet the requirements of membership, including those necessary to contribute to the defense of all NATO members, is in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area; and

(D) extending NATO membership to Montenegro will strengthen NATO, enhance stability in Southeast Europe, and advance the interests of the United States and its NATO allies.

(3) Support for NATO's Open Door Policy.—The policy of the United States is to support NATO's Open Door Policy that allows any European country to express its desire to join NATO and demonstrate its ability to meet the obligations of NATO membership.

(4) Future Consideration Of Candidates For Membership In NATO.—

(A) Senate Finding.—The Senate finds that the United States will not support the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty of, or the invitation to begin accession talks with, any European state (other than Montenegro), unless—

(i) the President consults with the Senate consistent with Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties); and

(ii) the prospective NATO member can fulfill all of the obligations and responsibilities of membership, and the inclusion of such state in NATO would serve the overall political and strategic interests of NATO and the United States.

(B) Requirement for Consensus and Ratification.—The Senate declares that no action or agreement other than a consensus decision by the full membership of NATO, approved by the national procedures of each NATO member, including, in the case of the United States, the requirements of Article II, section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States (relating to the advice and consent of the Senate to the making of treaties), will constitute a commitment to collective defense and consultations pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

(5) Influence Of Non-NATO Members On NATO Decisions.—The Senate declares that any country that is not a member of NATO shall have no impact on decisions related to NATO enlargement.

(6) Support for 2014 Wales Summit Defense Spending Benchmark.—The Senate declares that all NATO members should continue to move towards the guideline outlined in the 2014 Wales Summit Declaration to spend a minimum of 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense and 20 percent of their defense budgets on major equipment, including research and development, by 2024.

(7) Support for Montenegro's Democratic Reform Process.—Montenegro has made difficult reforms and taken steps to address corruption. The United States and other NATO member states should not consider this important process complete and should continue to urge additional reforms.

Sec. 3. Conditions.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following conditions:

(1) Presidential Certification.—Prior to the deposit of the instrument of ratification, the President shall certify to the Senate as follows:

(A) The inclusion of Montenegro in NATO will not have the effect of increasing the

overall percentage share of the United States in the common budgets of NATO.

(B) The inclusion of Montenegro in NATO does not detract from the ability of the United States to meet or to fund its military requirements outside the North Atlantic area.

(2) Annual Report on NATO Member Defense Spending.—Not later than December 1 of each year during the 8-year period following the date of entry into force of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Montenegro, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report, which shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may be accompanied by a classified annex, and which shall contain the following information:

(A) The amount each NATO member spent on its national defense in each of the previous 5 years.

(B) The percentage of GDP for each of the previous 5 years that each NATO member spent on its national defense.

(C) The percentage of national defense spending for each of the previous 5 years that each NATO member spent on major equipment, including research and development.

(D) Details on the actions a NATO member has taken in the most recent year reported to move closer towards the NATO guideline outlined in the 2014 Wales Summit Declaration to spend a minimum of 2 percent of its GDP on national defense and 20 percent of its national defense budget on major equipment, including research and development, if a NATO member is below either guideline for the most recent year reported.

Sec. 4. Definitions.

In this resolution:

(1) Appropriate Congressional Committees.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) NATO Members.—The term "NATO members" means all countries that are parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(3) Non-NATO Members.—The term "non-NATO members" means all countries that are not parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.

(4) North Atlantic Area.—The term "North Atlantic area" means the area covered by Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as applied by the North Atlantic Council.

(5) North Atlantic Treaty.—The term "North Atlantic Treaty" means the North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington April 4, 1949 (63 Stat. 2241; TIAS 1964), as amended.

(6) United States Instrument of Ratification.—The term "United States instrument of ratification" means the instrument of ratification of the United States of the Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Montenegro.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. WARREN:

S. 3511. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to expand the Secretarial Designee Program of the Department of Defense to include victims of acts of terror; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAHAM:

S. 3512. A bill to reauthorize the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Historic Preservation Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 3513. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to facilitate communication between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and border ranchers in Arizona and other border States and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 3514. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 3515. A bill to authorize previously appropriated resources for communities to address persistent or historical crime through collaborative cross-sector partnerships; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 3516. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center; read the first time.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 3517. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide appropriate rules for the application of the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities with respect to certain contract manufacturing or production arrangements; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 3518. A bill to impose nonnuclear sanctions with respect to Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 3519. A bill to address the psychological, social, and emotional needs of children, youth, and families who have experienced trauma, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 632. A resolution supporting a transition to 100 percent clean, renewable energy to help consumers, support the economy and national security of the United States, and avoid the worst impacts of climate change; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. Con. Res. 58. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that rates for inmate calling service should not exceed the affordable modified rate caps adopted by the Federal Communications Commission; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 24

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 24, a bill to clarify that an authorization

to use military force, a declaration of war, or any similar authority shall not authorize the detention without charge or trial of a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 1148

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1148, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes.

S. 1524

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1524, a bill to enable concrete masonry products manufacturers to establish, finance, and carry out a coordinated program of research, education, and promotion to improve, maintain, and develop markets for concrete masonry products.

S. 1911

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1911, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 2595

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2595, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 2712

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2712, a bill to restore amounts improperly withheld for tax purposes from severance payments to individuals who retired or separated from service in the Armed Forces for combat-related injuries, and for other purposes.

S. 2748

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 2748, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 2878

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2878, a bill to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to improve the ability of the United States to advance religious freedom globally through enhanced diplomacy, training, counterterrorism, and foreign assistance efforts, and through stronger and more flexible political responses to religious freedom violations and violent extremism worldwide, and for other purposes.

S. 2895

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2895, a bill to extend the civil statute of limitations for victims of Federal sex offenses.

S. 2957

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2957, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the first manned landing on the Moon.

S. 2989

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 2989, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States merchant mariners of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

S. 3188

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3188, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for biodiesel.

S. 3256

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3256, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the goal of all children in school and learning as an objective of the United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes.

S. 3284

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3284, a bill to oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections, and for other purposes.

S. 3364

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3364, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to accept the donation of facilities and related improvements for use by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 3478

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3478, a bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. 3504

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3504, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to implement Medicare payment policies designed to improve management of chronic disease, streamline care coordination, and improve quality outcomes without adding to the deficit.

S.J. RES. 40

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 40, a joint resolution approving the location of a memorial to commemorate and honor the members of the Armed Forces that served on active duty in support of Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 632—SUPPORTING A TRANSITION TO 100 PERCENT CLEAN, RENEWABLE ENERGY TO HELP CONSUMERS, SUPPORT THE ECONOMY AND NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND AVOID THE WORST IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

S. RES. 632

Whereas, in December 2016, nearly 200 nations that are parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted an historic international agreement to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change;

Whereas transitioning to clean energy will help reduce carbon pollution in the United States, and combat climate change;

Whereas transitioning to clean energy will help the United States meet its international commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

Whereas transitioning to a clean energy economy will create millions of well-paying jobs in the United States, save consumers in the United States money, and boost economic growth;

Whereas low-income communities, communities of color, and indigenous people in the United States are inordinately exposed to pollution from fossil fuels;

Whereas distributed renewable energy and energy efficiency can provide access to local jobs in cities in the United States while cleaning up neighborhoods;

Whereas, in 2005, the United States had fewer than 10,000 megawatts of installed wind and solar electric generating capacity;

Whereas, in 2016, the United States has more than 100,000 megawatts of installed wind and solar electric generating capacity;

Whereas, in 2016, the United States is projected to add more electric generating capacity from solar and wind than from any other source;

Whereas, by the end of 2016, there are projected to be—

(1) 310,000 individuals in the United States employed in the solar industry; and

(2) 88,000 individuals in the United States employed in the wind industry;

Whereas, by 2020, there are projected to be nearly 600,000 individuals in the United States employed in the wind and solar industries;

Whereas more than ½ of all new electricity capacity added in the world in 2015 was renewable; and

Whereas according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the United States has the technical potential to generate more than 100 times the quantity of electricity it consumes each year as of 2016 solely from wind, solar, and other renewable resources: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports a national goal of phasing out fossil fuel emissions and, by 2050, generating 100 percent of the electricity consumed in the United States from clean energy resources, such as solar, wind, geothermal, and other renewable resources; and

(2) supports policies to achieve that goal that will—

(A) create jobs for all individuals, especially in communities with high rates of unemployment or underemployment, and build a sustainable economy; and

(B) ensure universal access to clean energy for all homes and businesses in the United States, including for moderate- and low-income families.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 58—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT RATES FOR INMATE CALLING SERVICE SHOULD NOT EXCEED THE AFFORDABLE MODIFIED RATE CAPS ADOPTED BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Mr. BOOKER submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. CON. RES. 58

Whereas an estimated 5,000,000 United States children have, or have had, a parent in prison or jail;

Whereas phone calls make it easier for families of incarcerated individuals to maintain positive relationships with their loved ones who are incarcerated;

Whereas phone calls help to reduce recidivism and promote the well-being of children;

Whereas a reduction in recidivism rates by just 1 percent would save United States taxpayers \$250,000,000 per year in correctional costs;

Whereas families of incarcerated individuals frequently experience financial hardship because of the loss of a key wage earner;

Whereas the cost of maintaining contact with incarcerated loved ones through in-person visits can be prohibitive;

Whereas written correspondence, especially with small children and disabled individuals, can be an inadequate way of maintaining communication; and

Whereas the Federal Communications Commission has been steadfast in its efforts, in accordance with its authority under the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.)—

(1) to bring about a compromise on inmate calling service rate caps; and

(2) to ensure that those rates are just and reasonable: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) rates for inmate calling service should not exceed the affordable modified rate caps adopted by the Federal Communications Commission as of the date of the adoption of this resolution; and

(2) reduced inmate calling service rates should be implemented swiftly because of the importance of inmate calling service as a rehabilitative means of communication.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I have five requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 7, 2016, at 2 p.m., in room S-216 to the Capitol Building.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 7, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled "Assessing the Security of our Critical Surface Transportation Infrastructure."

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 7, 2016, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining the Department of the Interior's Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations, Four Years Later."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION
POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

The Committee on Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 7, 2016, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining the Competitive Impact of the AT&T-Time Warner Transaction."

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on December 7, 2016, from 3 p.m. in room SH-219 of the Hart Senate Office Building.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar Nos. 742 through 765 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Robert N. Polumbo

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Jerry D. Harris, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. James M. Holmes

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. William K. Lescher

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Kelly A. Aeschbach

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Vice Adm. Dixon R. Smith

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Joel E. DeGroot
Col. Christopher M. Faux
Col. Robert J. Gregory, III
Col. Henry U. Harder, Jr.
Col. Eric W. Lind
Col. David D. Zwart

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. David P. Baczewski
Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Cathcart
Brig. Gen. Brian T. Dravis
Brig. Gen. James O. Eifert
Brig. Gen. Richard W. Kelly
Brig. Gen. Christopher J. Knapp
Brig. Gen. Jon K. Mott
Brig. Gen. Clayton W. Moushon
Brig. Gen. Kerry L. Muehlenbeck
Brig. Gen. Howard P. Purcell
Brig. Gen. David P. San Clemente
Brig. Gen. Michael R. Taheri
Brig. Gen. Roger E. Williams, Jr.

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Jesse T. Simmons, Jr.

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. David M. McMinn

Brig. Gen. Ronald E. Paul

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. William E. Dickens, Jr.

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Brian K. Borgen
Col. Jeffrey S. Hinrichs
Col. Jay D. Jensen
Col. Bret C. Larson
Col. Todd J. McCubbin
Col. Patrice A. Melancon
Col. Ellen M. Moore
Col. Boyd C. L. Parker, IV
Col. Steven B. Parker
Col. Bryan P. Radliff
Col. Scott A. Sauter
Col. Constance M. Von Hoffman

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Randolph J. Staudenraus

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Craig L. LaFave
Brig. Gen. Pamela J. Lincoln
Brig. Gen. Donald R. Lindberg
Brig. Gen. Randall A. Ogden
Brig. Gen. James P. Scanlan
Brig. Gen. Patrick M. Wade

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Stephen C. Melton

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Paul E. Funk, II

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Gary J. Volesky

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James H. Dickinson

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Patrick M. Hamilton

The following Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Benjamin F. Adams, III
Brig. Gen. Wayne L. Black
Brig. Gen. Christopher M. Burns
Brig. Gen. Kurt S. Crytzer
Brig. Gen. Ivan E. Denton
Brig. Gen. James C. Ernst
Brig. Gen. Kevin R. Griese
Brig. Gen. Mark G. Malanka
Brig. Gen. Roy V. McCarty
Brig. Gen. Blake C. Ortner
Brig. Gen. Christopher J. Petty
Brig. Gen. Jessie R. Robinson
Brig. Gen. Steven T. Scott
Brig. Gen. Raymond F. Shields, Jr.
Brig. Gen. Bryan E. Suntheimer
Brig. Gen. Kirk E. Vanpelt
Brig. Gen. Timothy J. Wojtecki
Brig. Gen. Michael R. Zerberonia

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Mark A. Piterski

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Ellis F. Hopkins III

The following Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Col. Michael A. Abell
Col. Joseph L. Biehler
Col. Janeen L. Birkhead
Col. Marti J. Bissell
Col. Scott J. Boespflug
Col. Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.
Col. Patrick R. Bossetta
Col. Thomas R. Bouchard
Col. Robert A. Boyette
Col. Kenneth E. Brandt
Col. Stanley E. Budraitis
Col. Anthony R. Camacho
Col. Mike A. Canzoneri
Col. Rita B. Casey
Col. Gregory P. Chaney
Col. Paul B. Chauncey, III
Col. Bobby L. Christine
Col. Edward J. Chrystal, Jr.
Col. William E. Crane
Col. Darrell W. Daniels
Col. Gregory T. Day
Col. Henry S. Dixon
Col. Scott A. Doust
Col. Dwaine E. Drummond
Col. Diane L. Dunn
Col. Robert A. Dwan
Col. Leonard H. Dyer, Jr.
Col. Steve D. Elliott
Col. Francis J. Evon, Jr.
Col. Kelly A. Fisher
Col. Robert C. Frick
Col. Robert B. Gaston
Col. Andrew L. Gibson
Col. Kerry W. Goodman
Col. William D. Griswold
Col. Dennis J. Humphrey
Col. Robert W. Intruss
Col. Richard F. Johnson
Col. Jeffrey A. Jones
Col. Eric T. Judkins
Col. Kipling V. Kahler

Col. Moses Kaoui, Jr.
Col. Eric K. Little
Col. Zachary E. Maner
Col. James R. Mathews
Col. Mark A. Merlino
Col. Douglas R. Messner
Col. David J. Mikolaities
Col. Charles W. Moore
Col. Leah M. Moore
Col. Michel A. Natali
Col. Reginald G.A. Neal
Col. John M. Oberkirsch
Col. Stephen E. Osborn
Col. Rodney B. Painting
Col. Chad J. Parker
Col. Roger A. Presley, Jr.
Col. Jose J. Reyes
Col. Frank M. Rice
Col. Timothy L. Rieger
Col. James W. Ring
Col. John W. Rueger
Col. Adam R. Silvers
Col. Jeffrey D. Smiley
Col. Michael E. Spraggins
Col. Steven E. Stivers
Col. Mechelle M. Tuttle
Col. Jeffrey P. Van
Col. Thomas M. Vickers, Jr.
Col. Louis W. Wilham

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Mary M. Jackson

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1553 AIR FORCE nominations (15) beginning DANIEL J. BESSMER, and ending CHRISTIE BARTON WALTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 16, 2016.

PN1832 AIR FORCE nominations (28) beginning KIP T. AVERETT, and ending DANIEL S. WALKER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1833 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning SHAWN M. GARCIA, and ending MORGAN H. LAIRD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1834 AIR FORCE nominations (1903) beginning DANIEL C. ABELL, and ending PETER ZWART, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1835 AIR FORCE nomination of Gary A. Fairchild, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1836 AIR FORCE nomination of Megan M. Luka, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1837 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning BRANDON D. CLINT, and ending EDMUND J. RUTHERFORD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1838 AIR FORCE nominations (90) beginning ISAMETTIN A. ARAL, and ending LESLIE ANN ZYZDA-MARTIN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

PN1557 ARMY nomination of Brian C. Garver, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 16, 2016.

PN1689 ARMY nomination of Clifford D. Johnston, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 6, 2016.

PN1692 ARMY nomination of Reinaldo Gonzalez, II, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 6, 2016.

PN1712 ARMY nomination of Graham F. Inman which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 8, 2016.

PN1839 ARMY nomination of Eileen K. Jenkins, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1840 ARMY nomination of Jeffrey M. Farris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1841 ARMY nomination of Matthew T. Bell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1842 ARMY nomination of Melissa B. Reister, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1843 ARMY nomination of Charles M. Causey, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1844 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEPHEN A. LABATE, and ending RAYMOND J. ORR, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1845 ARMY nomination of Roxanne E. Wallace, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1846 ARMY nomination of Eric A. Mitchell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1847 ARMY nomination of Jonathan J. Vannatta, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1848 ARMY nomination of Dennis D. Calloway, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1849 ARMY nominations (3) beginning KENNETH L. ALFORD, and ending BRUCE T. SIDEBOTHAM, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1850 ARMY nomination of Henry Spring, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1851 ARMY nomination of Craig A. Yunker, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1852 ARMY nomination of Cornelius J. Pope, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1853 ARMY nomination of Anthony K. McConnell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1854 ARMY nomination of Jennifer L. Cummings, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1855 ARMY nominations (2) beginning DONALD J. ERPENBACH, and ending TIMOTHY A. FANTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1857 ARMY nomination of Carl I. Shaia, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1858 ARMY nomination of Lisa M. Barden, which was received by the Senate

and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1859 ARMY nomination of Roger D. Lyles, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1860 ARMY nomination of Clara A. Bieganeck, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1861 ARMY nomination of Isaiah M. Garfias which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1862 ARMY nomination of Louis E. Herrera, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1863 ARMY nomination of Schnicka L. Singleton, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1864 ARMY nomination of John R. Burchfield, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1865 ARMY nomination of Elizabeth S. Eatonferenzi, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1866 ARMY nomination of Richard D. Mina, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1867 ARMY nominations (44) beginning TEMIDAYO L. ANDERSON, and ending D0127914, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1869 ARMY nomination of Richard A. Gautier, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1870 ARMY nomination of Joseph A. Papenfus, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1871 ARMY nominations (9) beginning STUART G. BAKER, and ending WALTER D. VENNEMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1872 ARMY nomination of David S. Yuen, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1873 ARMY nomination of Donta A. White, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1874 ARMY nomination of Tony A. Hampton, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1875 ARMY nominations (18) beginning CHARLES C. ANDERSON, and ending JAMES D. WILLSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1876 ARMY nomination of David A. Yasenchock, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1877 ARMY nomination of Aaron C. Ramiro, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1878 ARMY nomination of Richard M. Strong, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1879 ARMY nomination of Brendon S. Baker, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1880 ARMY nominations (19) beginning LANNY J. ACOSTA, JR., and ending LANCE

B. TURLINGTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1900 ARMY nomination of Andrew J. Wade, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 16, 2016.

PN1902 ARMY nomination of Christopher S. Besser, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

PN1903 ARMY nomination of Chad C. Black, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

PN1904 ARMY nomination of Thomas D. Starkey, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

* PN1808 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (2) beginning Marva Michelle Butler, and ending Adonis Mariano Matos de Mello, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

* PN1907 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (2) beginning Stephen Donald Mull, and ending Victoria Jane Nuland, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

* PN1908 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (181) beginning Robert L. Adams, and ending Laura Ann Griesmer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

* PN1909 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (5) beginning Robert Stephen Beecroft, and ending Marie L. Yovanovitch, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

* PN1910 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (42) beginning Tristan J. Allen, and ending William F. Zeman which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

* PN1911 FOREIGN SERVICE nominations (180) beginning Anthony Abba, and ending Michael David Zgoda, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1905 MARINE CORPS nomination of Joshua D. Fitzgarrald, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

PN1906 MARINE CORPS nomination of Anthony C. Lyons, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 29, 2016.

IN THE NAVY

PN1633 NAVY nomination of Suzanne L. Hopkins, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 13, 2016.

PN1881 NAVY nominations (46) beginning JAFAR A. ALI, and ending ANTHONY K. WOLVERTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1882 NAVY nomination of Meryl A. Severson, III, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1883 NAVY nomination of Ashley R. Bjorklund, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1884 NAVY nomination of Adeleke O. Mowobi, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1885 NAVY nominations (2) beginning MARY K. ARBUTHNOT, and ending JOHN K. WERNER, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1886 NAVY nomination of Stephen W. Hedrick, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1887 NAVY nomination of Vincent M. J. Ambrosino, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1888 NAVY nomination of Neal P. Ridge, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1891 NAVY nomination of Abdeslam Bousalham, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1892 NAVY nomination of Scott M. Morey, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

PN1893 NAVY nomination of Christian R. Foschi, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 15, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 3516

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3516) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a best-practices peer review of each medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of health care delivered at each such medical center.

Mr. TILLIS. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2016

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, December 8; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany S. 2943 postcloture; finally, that all postcloture time on the conference report to accompany S. 2943 expire at 12:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:24 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, December 8, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ANN BEGEMAN, OF SOUTH DAKOTA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate December 7, 2016:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT N. POLUMBO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JERRY D. HARRIS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. JAMES M. HOLMES

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. WILLIAM K. LESCHER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. KELLY A. AESCHBACH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. DIXON R. SMITH

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOEL E. DEGROOT
COL. CHRISTOPHER M. FAUX
COL. ROBERT J. GREGORY III
COL. HENRY U. HARDER, JR.
COL. ERIC W. LIND
COL. DAVID D. ZWART

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. DAVID P. BACZEWSKI
BRIG. GEN. TIMOTHY J. CATHART
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN T. DRAVIS
BRIG. GEN. JAMES O. EIFERT
BRIG. GEN. RICHARD W. KELLY
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER J. KNAPP
BRIG. GEN. JON K. MOTT
BRIG. GEN. CLAYTON W. MOUSHON
BRIG. GEN. KERRY L. MUEHLENBECK

BRIG. GEN. HOWARD P. PURCELL
BRIG. GEN. DAVID P. SAN CLEMENTE
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL R. TAHERI
BRIG. GEN. ROGER E. WILLIAMS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JESSE T. SIMMONS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. DAVID M. MCINN
BRIG. GEN. RONALD E. PAUL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM E. DICKENS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BRIAN K. BORGEN
COL. JEFFREY S. HINRICHS
COL. JAY D. JENSEN
COL. BRET C. LARSON
COL. TODD J. MCCUBBIN
COL. PATRICE A. MELANCON
COL. ELLEN M. MOORE
COL. BOYD C. L. PARKER IV
COL. STEVEN B. PARKER
COL. BRYAN P. RADLIFF
COL. SCOTT A. SAUTER
COL. CONSTANCE M. VON HOFFMAN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. RANDOLPH J. STAUDENRAUS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. CRAIG L. LAFAVE
BRIG. GEN. PAMELA J. LINCOLN
BRIG. GEN. DONALD R. LINDBERG
BRIG. GEN. RANDALL A. OGDEN
BRIG. GEN. JAMES P. SCANLAN
BRIG. GEN. PATRICK M. WADE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. STEPHEN C. MELTON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. PAUL E. FUNK II

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. GARY J. VOLESKY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAMES H. DICKINSON

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. PATRICK M. HAMILTON

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. BENJAMIN F. ADAMS III
BRIG. GEN. WAYNE L. BLACK
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER M. BURNS
BRIG. GEN. KURT S. CRYTZER
BRIG. GEN. IVAN E. DENTON
BRIG. GEN. JAMES C. ERNST

BRIG. GEN. KEVIN R. GRIESE
BRIG. GEN. MARK G. MALANKA
BRIG. GEN. ROY V. MCCARTY
BRIG. GEN. BLAKE C. ORTNER
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER J. PETTY
BRIG. GEN. JESSIE R. ROBINSON
BRIG. GEN. STEVEN T. SCOTT
BRIG. GEN. RAYMOND F. SHIELDS, JR.
BRIG. GEN. BRYAN E. SUNTHEIMER
BRIG. GEN. KIRK E. VANPELT
BRIG. GEN. TIMOTHY J. WOJTECKI
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL R. ZERBONIA

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. MARK A. PITERSKI

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. ELLIS F. HOPKINS III

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. ABELL
COL. JOSEPH L. BIEHLER
COL. JANEEN L. BIRCKHEAD
COL. MARTI J. BISSELL
COL. SCOTT J. BOESPFLUG
COL. RAYMOND D. BOSSERT, JR.
COL. PATRICK R. BOSSETTA
COL. THOMAS R. BOUCHARD
COL. ROBERT A. BOYETTE
COL. KENNETH E. BRANDT
COL. STANLEY E. BUDRAITIS
COL. ANTHONY R. CAMACHO
COL. MIKE A. CANZONERI
COL. RITA B. CASEY
COL. GREGORY P. CHANEY
COL. PAUL B. CHAUNCEY III
COL. BOBBY L. CHRISTINE
COL. EDWARD J. CHRYSTAL, JR.
COL. WILLIAM E. CRANE
COL. DARRELL W. DANIELS
COL. GREGORY T. DAY
COL. HENRY S. DIXON
COL. SCOTT A. DOUST
COL. DWAIN E. DRUMMOND
COL. DIANE L. DUNN
COL. ROBERT A. DWAN
COL. LEONARD H. DYER, JR.
COL. STEVE D. ELLIOTT
COL. FRANCIS J. EVON, JR.
COL. KELLY A. FISHER
COL. ROBERT C. FRICK
COL. ROBERT B. GASTON
COL. ANDREW L. GIBSON
COL. KERRY W. GOODMAN
COL. WILLIAM D. GRISWOLD
COL. DENNIS J. HUMPHREY
COL. ROBERT W. INTRESS
COL. RICHARD F. JOHNSON
COL. JEFFREY A. JONES
COL. ERIC T. JUDKINS
COL. KIPLING V. KAHLER
COL. MOSES KAOIWI, JR.
COL. ERIC K. LITTLE
COL. ZACHARY E. MANER
COL. JAMES R. MATHEWS
COL. MARK A. MERLINO
COL. DOUGLAS R. MESSNER
COL. DAVID J. MIKOLAITIS
COL. CHARLES W. MOORE
COL. LEAH M. MOORE
COL. MICHEL A. NATALI
COL. REGINALD G.A. NEAL
COL. JOHN M. OBERKIRSCH
COL. STEPHEN E. OSBORN
COL. RODNEY B. PAINTING
COL. CHAD J. PARKER
COL. ROGER A. PRESLEY, JR.
COL. JOSE J. REYES
COL. FRANK M. RICE
COL. TIMOTHY L. RIEGER
COL. JAMES W. RING
COL. JOHN W. RUEGER
COL. ADAM R. SILVERS
COL. JEFFREY D. SMILEY
COL. MICHAEL E. SPRAGGINS
COL. STEVEN E. STIVERS
COL. MECHELLE M. TUTTLE
COL. JEFFREY P. VAN
COL. THOMAS M. VICKERS, JR.
COL. LOUIS W. WILHAM

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MARY M. JACKSON

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DANIEL J. BESSMER AND ENDING WITH CHRISTIE BARTON WALTON,

WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JUNE 16, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KIP T. AVERETT AND ENDING WITH DANIEL S. WALKER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SHAWN M. GARCIA AND ENDING WITH MORGAN H. LAIRD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DANIEL C. ABELL AND ENDING WITH PETER ZWART, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF GARY A. FAIRCHILD, TO BE COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF MEGAN M. LUKA, TO BE MAJOR.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRANDON D. CLINT AND ENDING WITH EDMUND J. RUTHERFORD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ISAMETTIN A. ARAL AND ENDING WITH LESLIE ANN ZYZDA-MARTIN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRIAN C. GARVER, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CLIFFORD D. JOHNSTON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF REINALDO GONZALEZ II, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF GRAHAM F. INMAN, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF EILEEN K. JENKINS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JEFFREY M. FARRIS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MATTHEW T. BELL, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MELISSA B. REISTER, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHARLES M. CAUSEY, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEPHEN A. LABATE AND ENDING WITH RAYMOND J. ORR, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ROXANNE E. WALLACE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ERIC A. MITCHELL, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JONATHAN J. VANNATTA, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DENNIS D. CALLOWAY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KENNETH L. ALFORD AND ENDING WITH BRUCE T. SIDEBOTHAM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF HENRY SPRING, JR., TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CRAIG A. YUNKER, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CORNELIUS J. POPE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ANTHONY K. MCCONNELL, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JENNIFER L. CUMMINGS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DONALD J. ERPENBACH AND ENDING WITH TIMOTHY A. PANTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CARL I. SHAI, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF LISA M. BARDEN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ROGER D. LYLES, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CLARA A. BIEGANNEK, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ISAAH M. GARFIAS, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF LOUIS E. HERRERA, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF SCHNICKA L. SINGLETON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JOHN R. BURCHFIELD, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ELIZABETH S. EATONFERENZI, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF RICHARD D. MINA, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TEMIDAYO L. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH D0127914, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF RICHARD A. GAUTIER, JR., TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF JOSEPH A. PAPPENFUS, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STUART G. BAKER AND ENDING WITH WALTER D. VENNEMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID S. YUEN, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DONTA A. WHITE, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF TONY A. HAMPTON, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHARLES C. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH JAMES D. WILLSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID A. YASENCHOCK, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF AARON C. RAMIRO, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF RICHARD M. STRONG, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRENDON S. BAKER, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LANNY J. ACOSTA, JR. AND ENDING WITH LANCE B. TURLINGTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

ARMY NOMINATION OF ANDREW J. WADE, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER S. BESSER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHAD C. BLACK, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF THOMAS D. STARKEY, TO BE COLONEL.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JOSHUA D. FITZGARRALD, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF ANTHONY C. LYONS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF SUZANNE L. HOPKINS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JAFAR A. ALI AND ENDING WITH ANTHONY K. WOLVERTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF MERYL A. SEVERSON III, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ASHLEY R. BJORKLUND, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ADELEKE O. MOWOBI, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARY K. ARBUTHNOT AND ENDING WITH JOHN K. WERNER, JR., WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

NAVY NOMINATION OF STEPHEN W. HEDRICK, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF VINCENT M. J. AMBROSINO, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF NEAL P. RIDGE, TO BE CAPTAIN.

NAVY NOMINATION OF ABDESLAM BOUSALHAM, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF SCOTT M. MOREY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF CHRISTIAN R. FOSCHI, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

FOREIGN SERVICE

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARVA MICHELLE BUTLER AND ENDING WITH ADONIS MARIANO MATOS DE MELLO, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 15, 2016.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEPHEN DONALD MULL AND ENDING WITH VICTORIA JANE NULAND, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2016.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROBERT L. ADAMS AND ENDING WITH LAURA ANN GRIESMER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2016.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROBERT STEPHEN BEECROFT AND ENDING WITH MARIE L. YOVANOVITCH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2016.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TRISTAN J. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH WILLIAM F. ZEMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2016.

FOREIGN SERVICE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ANTHONY ABBA AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL DAVID ZGODA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2016.